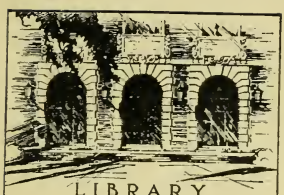
Henry Jackson.



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MICHAEL,

THE MARRIED MAN;

OR,

THE SEQUEL TO

THE HISTORY OF

MICHAEL KEMP.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"SHADES OF CHARACTER," "HISTORY OF MICHAEL KEMP,"
&c. &c.

PART II.

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MICHAEL,

THE MARRIED MAN.

If you wish for perfect happiness, seek it not among frail mortals; for there is not an event however prosperous, but brings with it some painful consequences, to the circle among whom it occurs. Poor Mary Humphries and Margaret Beal, felt it, and the faithful and kind hearted Betty Smith was glad her master was made happy, although it had occasioned many disagreeable reflections on her. As for the Miss Jennings's it had crushed all their hopes. Michael's appeared an unmixed cup, and had it not been for her dear mother, Esther's would almost have been the same, but she was a noble creature, and had always felt more for others than for herself. She was in great fear lest Michael should

think she was unhappy, and she forebore to say, how much of her heart she had left behind her at the Brow; and when they had passed the known limits of Esther's recollection, and were entering on scenes of novel interest, as Michael painted this little view, and that pleasant prospect, Esther endeavoured to rise above that oppression which rested on her heart. But this good young man could account for it, and doubted not, but so duteous a daughter, would make a kind wife.

James Finch was pleased with the opportunity of making himself useful to Mr. Kemp, and his nice mother was delighted to see, that what was a season of gaiety to others, threw him into a state of restless activity; he seemed really to want to make business, and when he found little to do, was determined to signalize himself, and sending for some invisible green from the next town, began painting the little trellis work at the door, and the arbour in the garden. "Dear sir," said Betty Smith, "I am sure master would be sadly grieved to see you at such a job as this. Why, William, you know as master gave you particular orders to pay all respect to Mr. Finch." William scratched

his head, and declared it was no fault of his. Mrs. Finch said, it was no fault of any one's, for she loved to see her boy busy, and it was what he often did at home, and understood it very well. Betty Smith smiled in her good-natured way, and said, she thought the young gentleman went about it very handy. Fair warnings were given to all the inhabitants, not to paint themselves; and this good-natured young man was highly gratified, at the improvement of the Brow entrance. He would willingly have extended his labours, had not his mother and sister, voted against smell of paint, on the return of the bride and bridegroom. "Well, what can I do then?" "I tell you what you shall do; I have a present for Mr. Kemp, on his return, which I know will be acceptable to him, a folio Bible; and as you write a very good hand, James, you shall write, 'The gift of Martha Finch to Mr. Kemp, a memorial of her respect for his worth, and gratitude for many years of kind and faithful attention to her interest.'" And now there was not a pen good enough in the house for this writing, or a knife sharp enough to mend one. He prepared the paper with pounce, he ruled the lines with the greatest

exactness, thought his mother's sentence was not half so expressive as it should have been. She persisted in saying it expressed her meaning; and the restless lad was at last satisfied.

The kind attentions of Mrs. Finch and Mrs. Kemp were directed to soothe Mary; and every one agreed, that though the prospect of happiness was unclouded, still the breach upon her pleasures was very great. But grief, when slightly founded, where only our own pleasure is concerned, finds relief in tears; and when Mary weighed Esther's advantages against her own privations, she was constrained to allow that her grief was selfish, and that conviction was sufficient for Mary. Fanny Meredith and Jemima now renewed their acquaintance, and all the little news at the Valley and at the Brow were communicated; and Jemima was equally astonished and concerned to find, that the young Mr. Jennings had taken a farm, and with a pomp proportionate to his insignificance, was continually thwarting Michael in every possible way. "We suppose," said Fanny, "that the disappointment about Joe is at the bottom of it;" and here she related all the folly of the young people. "At the last vestry, he himself had pro-

posed a measure, which Michael thought a good one, and immediately joined, very desirous of shewing nothing but Christian kindness towards one who had so continually opposed him in every way. But you know my brother: I need not tell you upon what principles he acts. Well, no sooner did he find that Michael agreed and thought it a good plan, but he found that, upon second thoughts, there were objections to it. And now there is another farmer come in, where poor farmer Newton lived; and there seems likely to be strong opposition in the parish, a thing never known before. However, Mr. Lascelles observed, when Michael mentioned it, 'I have long been afraid, our sea was too calm, and that we should find it 'good to be here;' and then, in his own delightful manner, he continued, 'Let the winds blow, and the waters rage, we know who is in the vessel.'—And my dear brother came home quite in good spirits."

The summer glow was on Nature's beauties, the time of day was too warm for open travelling; but some light showers had fallen the evening before, and very heavy rain in the night, so that, though very warm, it was not dusty. They drove slowly, and meant to take a quiet dish of

tea at a rural inn, whose windows overlooked a neat garden, and to proceed in the evening the last seven miles. "How much cooler than I expected," said Esther.

M. The light winds so fan the air, he holdeth———

On the slope of the hill they were ascending, the slanting rays of the sun shed the strongest brilliance; the long bridge before them seemed to reach to the declination of two hills, and as it were, to span them, and between them a rivulet ran over a rocky bed, meeting considerable obstruction from rude masses of stone fringed with weeds of luxuriant growth: these combined with mosses, and a plant somewhat resembling the cole plant, (such as the poor sometimes boil when they have no other vegetable,) in rich profusion, and watered by the late rains, finely contrasted with the white substance of which one hill was formed, and the yellow loam of the other. The curling vapour of a wood fire in a cottage, which seemed almost a speck beneath, formed a picture of rural beauty not unfrequent in the country through which they travelled. But they had got out of the chaise, for the horse felt the heat and the hill; and they were slowly proceeding till they reached the

top, and here the prospect opened in wild magnificence. "How very beautiful," said Esther, as they turned to gaze upon it. To their left, were woods behind woods, the foreground was occupied by dark masses of fir, and the beech around the hill, with here and there the lighter foliage of ash, and the blue Scotch fir, and small tufts of the willow. Indeed, the wood-crowned hill seemed planted by the hand of taste. "I question, if we do not enjoy as much of these beauties as the possessor," said Michael; "to him they are every day pleasures, while we only see them now and then; and there is the house of prayer, and may we not indulge a hope, that some good man like our Mr. Lascelles, watches over his flock, and dispenses the Word of life to his people."

As they were passing, and just about to get into the chaise, two young things jumped from a tree by the side of the road, and seemed anxious to hide. "I think they are birds'-nesting," said Esther. "It is a cruel practice; let us try to persuade them." So Michael, putting his hand upon the shoulder of the foremost, attempted to detain him, asking what he was doing? The ready reply, "*nothing*," was on his tongue; "he was going home."

Michael took him by surprise. "You are birds'-nesting. Now, if I were to come to your father's, and to fetch you out of your nice cottage;" the boys both laughed. "It isn't a nice cottage, 'tis an old totterish place. Father often says, we might as well live in a tree; for when the wind blows, we rock just like the birds." Michael gave them sixpence, and they ran off, promising not to touch them.

Esther. The variety of season is to me always pleasant. Spring is resurrection; summer the perfection of our spring hopes; autumn is so rich in beautiful colours, and winter is so sociable, I always seem to enjoy my dear mother's company more than at any other time.

Michael. I hope, my dear Esther, to learn of you to love winter; but I own I never did love it, and I suppose the reason is, I never lived with a friend, whose society could make me forget the cold and chilling influence. I never did sit down by a winter fire to converse, since Stephen left me. It is true I could go to his fireside, and enjoy his and his dear wife's company; but then a walk up the Brow steep made the contrast more painful; and poor Betty was never comfortable if I staid till it was dark.

E. The good creature.

M. Yes, I am greatly indebted to Betty; she is one of God's gracious gifts to me; and I may say, she has given me unmixed comfort. Oh, my dear Esther, what dependent creatures we are.

E. Yes: and I ——

M. Let me beg you will say all you think to me, my dearest companion. You are naturally reserved; are you not?

E. Me; oh, dear, no; I try to be so, because I so often have said what I wished to call back; so often have been cautioned by my mother and aunt, not to speak so openly.

M. (*Smiling.*) But you must leave off trying; because I should like to know all you think, without any reserve.

E. Indeed you shall; only promise to correct what is wrong, and then I shall gain by my own mistake.

Michael looked on the dear, open-hearted christian girl, who was now his own, his own while life remained, and the water stood in his eyes; but he rarely wept; so he brushed it away, and turned cheerfully, saying, "Yes, my love, but you must encourage me."

E. How?

M. By making the same promise.

E. How can I? I have heard of you for so many years; you have lived so consistently, so—

M. Oh, hush, hush; you know me not. Heart sins; God looks there, and how I deplore these, he only can know, who knoweth the heart. "As face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man." The same weaknesses and infirmities, the same difficulties and obstructions in this path; and happy it is for us that it is so. Esther looked as though she would have said, "and wherefore?" "Why, my love, why is Christ said to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities? Because he was in all points tempted like as we are."

They were within a mile and a quarter of their destined tea-drinking, when they saw, under the hedge, a very clean looking poor woman, with her baby on her knee, and a girl about four years old standing beside her. She was evidently weeping, and looked hot and weary. Esther turned to Michael, aad said, "Do, Michael, ask her if she is not well." Michael drew up, saying, "Are you well, good woman?" "Yes sure, to be sure, well enough, and

please you; but," and she looked piteously, sighing, " but I have heard sad news to-day." " Indeed! What have you heard, my good woman?" " Why, the first was, that the gude man has fallen in battle, and I have only to pray for strength to keep me from want, and to get bread for my poor bairns." The little girl looked up piteously, as though she understood it. " How far have you walked to-day?" asked Michael. " I cannot justly say; it has seemed very long to me. It was only Friday that I got the answer. I went down to the west, you see, Sir, to meet the poor man, and there I got the news: and I had little heart for walking since; for he was a kind friend of mine, and he never lived to see his young sailor, as he called him, my pretty boy that I have at home;" and here she wept afresh. " I was thinking, Esther, perhaps the poor thing would be glad of a cast. I could walk beside you for this mile." " Why no, Sir, for me; but, if the lady would let the poor little maid stand beside her, it would be an unco kindness; for she is foot sore, and the shoes are nearly come to paper?" and so the poor little thing was kindly and carefully put

in the gig, and the mother persuaded to get in also.

They were not aware that they should pass by that same inn that Fanny and her father had been so kindly received in, a few years before; so they were greatly disappointed at finding the modest little place they meant to rest at, converted into a private house, and themselves obliged to rest at this very handsome well frequented inn; but, before they entered the town, the poor Scotchwoman, whose sense of propriety was very great, insisted on getting down at the toll-gate. "Well," said Michael, as he lifted the child down, "let us look at your little foot; I should like to give you a pair of strong shoes." "The blessings on you, Sir; 'tis a gift, indeed, that; for I must go up to London about the prize money." "Well, get a bed somewhere, and let us see you to-morrow morning by seven o'clock."

At the appointed hour, M'Kenneth came for the shoes, and little Margery kept saying, "thank ye, Sir;" and looking down at her shoes, and walking a little to hear the noise on the boards, and trying to tie and untie them; and when the poor

mother found, that by going through the regular forms, the business might be transacted without a journey to London, she said, "Oh, what a providence as I met you, Sir!"

Michael. "Where are you going now?" and he found, upon inquiry, that she was at that time residing within four miles of the Brow, keeping house for her brother, who was a Scotch gardener, and with whom she had left her young sailor, as she called him. The young infant had borne fatigue well? and the mother was so cheered by the good news, that fifteen miles seemed but a light trip, so completely was she renovated; but, in the midst of her joy, she awoke to a sorrow, that time only could soothe; her kind-hearted William was no more. "Oh, Sir, I hate war; 'tis a cruel profession that, murdering one another; I can't abide it. And now, oh!" Then poor M'Kenneth's heart seemed ready to burst, and she, kneeling before Esther, said, "Dear lady, I do pray the good God to have you in his own care, and may you long live in peace and happiness, and may your children, if you have any, take to good ways, and grow up like ye." Poor Esther was

heartily glad, when the benediction was ended.

The treatment at the White Horse had, as usual, been civil and cleanly; and, in the morning, ere they departed, Michael took an opportunity of seeing the landlady. He said, "Some years ago, Madam, you were very kind to my father and sister, and I assure you your kindness was not lost upon them. Mrs. Walker, too, felt it very sensibly." "Oh, I think I recollect a very pretty looking young woman, and her venerable father. I was glad, Sir, it was in my power to show my gratitude to Mrs. Walker. I hope they are well, Sir." "I thank you, ma'am; never better. My sister is married, and has two children." "Dear me," said the landlady, "why she looked quite a young thing." Michael smiled, got into the chaise, bowed to Mrs. Jenks, and quietly pursued his journey.

But we must now return to the Party that we left at the Brow. "But, come, Sir," said Mr. Brownrigg, in a cheerful manner, "you and I must set out on our afternoon visit." Joe did not know what to make of this, and would gladly have slipt by Mr. Brownrigg, but this latter

was a wag, and had determined not to lose his play; so, in a chatty familiar manner, he caught Joseph by the arm, and they descended the steep together.

As they drew near Sizors, seeing the little knots of flowers under the windows, "Ah," said Brownrigg, "this is just what I wanted; I wanted a hint for laying out my garden; here is exactly the thing; most tasty." Joe said, "It was very pretty indeed—all Miss Louisa's doing; that is, she and the boy: to be sure, Miss Louisa did not dig it." "Certainly not," said Brownrigg. Just then, a lady appeared, with flowers, and ringlets set like lime-twigs, for poor Mr. Joseph.

Miss Louisa had been as much upon the fidget to see Mr. Joseph, and was prepared to give him the kindest welcome; when, contrary to all expectation, her father, who had been out upon business, returned sooner than was expected; and the little odd boy, who was to have waited at tea, was called to take his master's horse. He, in his roughest tone, said, "Servant, Sir," and walked into the house. "So, Mr. Joseph, you are come to your brother's wedding, I hear." "Yes, Sir," said Joe. "A very sensible man, that; he is deter-

mined to have a wife who can get her living."

Misfortunes had soured the temper of Mr. Jennings, and the poor girls whom he had helped to spoil, now felt the sting of it, and they were equally to be pitied; and Brownrigg, who had come with a full intention to laugh at them, would have given up the project, had not Joe begun. "Miss Louisa, this gentleman is come to see your garden;" and Miss Louisa, Miss Antoinette, and all the Misses, gathered round to shew it. So they sallied forth, and Brownrigg very knowingly offered his arm to Miss Louisa. "You are going, Sir, I think, to settle in this country." "Yes, Madam; and where can one turn for taste, if not to Sizors? I wish to lay out my garden." Here Joe put in, "I am sure Miss Louisa would shew you, Mr. Brownrigg; wouldn't you, Miss Louisa?" "Yes, certainly, I should be very happy to oblige." Nevertheless, she felt uneasy, for she did not understand this visit; and really thought it odd, that a total stranger should come uninvited.

After wandering about for some minutes, without saying a word, they proposed to return into the parlour to tea; and here they found the poor good-natured, suffering

mother, endeavoured to please all parties, and succeeding with difficulty. "Well, Mr. Joseph, how goes on the flute?" said old Jennings. And he grinned maliciously, as though he longed to laugh at him. "The flute, Mr. Joseph; can you play the flute?" said Brownrigg. "A little, Sir," was the modest reply. "I did not bring it with me, Sir," said Joseph, looking very harmless. "I wish I had, if I had thought Mr. Jennings would have liked to hear it."

This modest reply almost subdued old Jennings, who was not naturally an ill-tempered man. "I remember, my dear," said he to his wife, "when I used to try at it to please you." "It was not the flute, dear," said Mrs. J. "it was the flageolet, if you remember." "True, love, so it was;" and this little good-natured dialogue seemed to put them all right again, when in straggled Miss Fanny from a warm walk, and she seemed to look round for the introduction to the new visitor.

Louisa, looking at Joseph with an air of protection, said, "you forget, Mr. Joseph, to introduce this gentleman." "What! don't you know who it is, love?" said her father. "Dear me, no, Papa; 'tis never the fashion to know any body 'till they are introduced, you know. I should never

pretend to be acquainted;" and before she could finish her speech, her father burst out, "Pretend, pretend; always some pretension or other. Would you pretend to tell me, that you don't know who that gentleman is. Why is'nt he the rich tobacconist as have left off business, and have come to settle in these parts? Is'nt he that nice girl's uncle, Esther Humphries? Why, how often have you seen him at church! Come, come, girls, do leave off nonsense, pray. It's all very well for fine folks that have got nothing else to do, but for you who have got your living to get 'tis quite out of the way. Never let me hear any more on't."

Brownrigg had a great deal of tact, a great deal of kind feeling, and he began to pity the poor Jennings's; thought they were silly, harmless girls, and traced a great many of their faults where they were indeed due, to the father and mother. He came upon an errand which he must not forget; namely, to divert the parties present, and to bring Joe back safe to the Brow. So he said, "Sir, we young people, you know," looking arch, "must needs catch the fashion of the times, even though we may not be as wise as our forefathers." "Ha, ha, ha," said old Jennings; "Very

true, Sir; very true;" and seemed exceedingly to enjoy Mr. Brownrigg's wit. "You've not long come from London, Sir, I think?" "Not very long." And now Joe began to hope he should get a little private conversation with Miss Louisa; and he was endeavouring to edge his chair a little closer, but Brownrigg turned from the father, and said, "You have never, ladies, asked me one word of the fashions, though I was in the Regent's Park Sunday three weeks, and passed the king as close as I am sitting to you at this moment." "Did you, indeed, Sir?" said Mrs. J., wondering. "Yes, ma'am: and I thought his Majesty looked remarkably well, and I was very glad of it." And here Joe, who never could let an opportunity slip to tell what he had heard, observed, "that people wer'nt so fond of the king now, and that many people that he knew did'nt approve of his goings on." "Pray, Sir," said Jennings, "what can the people that you know have to do with the king? I'd have you take care, Mr. Joseph, how you get acquainted with such people." Brownrigg fidgetted, looked at his watch, and asked the ladies if they had any objection to a walk? "Not the least," was the reply; and up they started to fetch bonnets, &c.

No sooner did they return, than Brown-

rigg gave his arm to Miss Louisa; and old Jennings, looking out after them, said, "Why, ah, that will do; if the girl can fancy him; and he's foolish enough to take such a doll of a thing, I've no objection."

"And now, which way shall we walk, ladies?" said Brownrigg.

Miss Fanny and Miss Tiny had always been offended with Joe, for his preference to Louisa; so, that when he offered his arm to them, they declined it, saying, "They thanked him, they had rather not." So Joe grew sulky, angry with Louisa, and walked on without a single observation, till they reached the side of the river; when, arm in arm with his two daughters, Mr. Lascelles met them. Brownrigg did not altogether like his post, particularly as the circumstances of the morning had brought Mr. Lascelles in some degree into the plot, with the exception of the kind part Brownrigg was acting; but he was past the age at which we care much for the opinions of others; so he made Mr. Lascelles a very profound bow, and passed on with his lady. "And pray Miss Jennings," said he, "what do you think of your parson?" Had Miss J. known exactly Mr. B.'s opinion, her's would undoubtedly have been the same. At last she ventured to say, "She believed he was a particu-

larly good kind of man; but he was rather too strict, she must own, for her." "Why, Ma'am, I've been of your opinion," said Mr. Brownrigg, "sometimes. Indeed, I thought so this morning, when he gave us the exhortation." "The exhortation! Dear me, Sir, what was that; I did not hear a word of it"—"Why we—" Brownrigg began to repent that he had said any thing but he was in for it—"Why, we had an exhortation to the newly-married at the Brow." "Oh, at the Brow, Sir, not in the church." "No, Ma'am, not in the church." "How long, Sir," said Miss L., if it is not impertinent, pray how long has Mr. Michael Kemp been engaged to Miss Humphries?" Brownrigg thought it *was* impertinent; so slightly bending to Miss L., "Really Madam it is a question I never asked." "Pray, Sir," said Miss L., finding it difficult to supply conversation, "What is an exhortation?" "Why, Ma'am, exhortations are of many kinds; but the exhortation this morning, was to engage us all to lead a religious life, and for the single to get married as fast they could. Was'nt that it Mr. Joseph? And you see here, Madam, Mr. Joe and I, in obedience to Mr. L.'s kind command, only waited till dinner was over, and here we are, you see." Miss Tiny, who did not

want wit, added, " But, you see, Sir, as we were not present at your exhortation, we know not well how to profit by it." " A very fair invitation, Madam," said Brownrigg." " Mr. Joseph will doubtless instruct you; but I am engaged, you see."

Joseph neither understood nor relished the joke, but walked on pouting; and Brownrigg being a man of business, kept to his point, wished the ladies good afternoon, and brought Mr. Joseph safe to the Brow.

Joseph's understanding was too limited to perceive the guiding hand, and he was seriously displeased with Louisa, he thought she slighted him; and had no objection, in his present state of mind, to give her up. The only difficulty that remained, was to prevent the visit being repeated.

Brownrigg told the whole to old Kemp, who was very sensible of the kindness; and, in his plain, straight-forward, honest way, said, " We must contrive to send him home; what could we do in such a cottage as ours, Sir, with such a young lady as that?" " Dear me, no; unless Joe had sense to maintain himself, and get a cottage of his own." " No, no, Sir; whenever Joe marries, he must marry a sensible maid-servant, not a fine young lady. He

must have some one with more sense than himself, Sir. The lad's not ill-tempered, but so soon led astray."

After consulting with his wife, who said, "You remember, my dear, what our Michael did before; he sent Joe on some business, for the poor boy likes to be of consequence." They turned to Fanny. "What could we employ Joe about, my dear, just to take him from these Jennings'?" Jem Brown overheard this, and said, "When does Mr. Joseph go home?" "He came with the intention of staying till *Monday*," said Mrs. Kemp; "longer than that, we could not get leave for. Then Joseph must return to his business. Till then, the difficulty is so to engage him, as that he may not think we govern him." "Pray, is'nt Mr. Joseph a nursery-man?" "Yes, and he is really very clever at his business. His master is quite satisfied with him. If you could consult him about heaths, he understands their propagation, and all the American plants. His master is very much satisfied with his care; and Joe is very fond of being consulted." His father turned away smiling, and the conversation ended with "poor dear Joe." But Brownrigg had a deep plot in his head, of which more at a future day.

How some days seem exalted above

others. Tuesday was a day looked forward to with delight, by all this party. "Tuesday, I shall see my dear Esther again," said Mary Humphries; "And Tuesday we shall get home," said Michael and Esther; and many hearts were longing for Tuesday. Last, not least, poor Betty Smith. It was long since her dear master had left home, and the house seemed unked without him. "To be sure, old Mr. Kemp do read the prayer and the chapter, but my master makes so many pretty observations and seems to have such a fine experience.

But the village was not without its spite, though there was so little ground for malignity. Some reported that he had gone away, and never given the ringers; others, that he had run out of church, and never paid Mr. Lascelles for marrying him; and again, that Mr. Lascelles, with his two daughters, was obliged to go to the Brow after his money; that Esther's rich uncle, was going to marry Miss Jennings, and had taken the opportunity of fixing the business, while his miserly nephew was out: it was true he had taken Mr. Joseph with him; but then, he was such a blockhead, he could not see an inch before him; that old Mrs. Kemp was left behind, to see that nothing was wasted; and that

poor Margaret and Mary, were obliged to be dressed up by their brother, to make them fit to appear. All this was told to Betty Smith; who, if she had a weak side, erred in this, that she was too willing to lend an ear to foolish reports. Michael always said to her, "Betty, wait till the news is cold; and then, I think, you will not find it worth bringing home." She remembered her master's words, but was apt to forget to apply them. Dear faithful Betty; her heart was so warm with love to her master, that a word of disrespect to him was a sin she could not pardon.

There were a few gentle showers in the early part of the day, but never enough to make the travellers uncomfortable; and their hearts were turned to the praise of him, who had so eminently blessed them. "I wonder what they are all about at home," said Esther. *(Michael smiling,)* "I think some one is longing to see some one," and the tear was in Esther's eye; and "she is a kind mother," convinced Michael he was understood. "I hope all my friends at P—— will be at home, Esther. I shall like to show you my dear Mr. Walker, to whom I owe so much." "Have you not some brothers and sisters at home still?" said Esther. "Yes, one dear little sister about nine, and a brother

seven." "But they are not left at home alone, are they?" "No; my mother has kind neighbours, who takes care when she is absent, and it is a rare thing for her to come out."

As they drew near the turnpike gate, of which the reader has so often heard, they found it a shelter from a violent storm which was just coming on; and they were obliged to rest longer than they could have wished in such a place; for several dropped in, whose conversation was far from pleasing. "You have got a fine new road here," says one to the turnpike collector. "Yes; and a fine deal of money it has cost," says another. "Ah! that would never have been, if it had not been for the parson: his daughter is going to be married to a fine, dashing lawyer, a first cousin of hers: he comes down travelling in his town chariot, and expects to find all the roads just as they are round Lunnen." "I don't think the parson would ever have thought of it," said another, "if it hadn't been for that flourishing sprig. He's quiet enough himself; and beside, he haven't been well enough to ride on horseback for a long time. I heard that our member's son was looking out for the living more than a year ago; but I believe it would have been a tight struggle; for the people

of this village are very fond of the parson's son." There was a quiet old man, who sat smoking in the corner, to the great annoyance of Esther, whose head ached, and could not at that time well bear it. Hitherto he had not spoken, but now he said, "Fond of him? and with good reason. Isn't he a fine young gentleman, and a good young gentleman? and has he not grown up among us? And as for the dashing lawyer you talk about, he's a fine lad; I remember him from a child: why, he's our parson's brother's son, that died in foreign parts. Why, don't you remember, Jem," said he, calling to the turnpike man, who was giving change at the gate, "Don't you remember Mr. Protheroe, that used to jump off his horse, and set him running through the gate and take a long leap, and clear it; and tell me that he would rather pay a penny for a cheesecake than a turnpike; but I used to catch him coming back, when he could not speak for laughing: I used to threaten to have him before the commissioners?" "Why, yes father, I remember it well; and you used to laugh too." "I knew it was all play, Jem. He generally paid double for his gate." "Well, all this is nothing," said the man who first began to grumble. "I say he has given us a

deal of plague: wasn't the road pretty enough and good enough?" "But don't you know, it will save the horses a very heavy drag up that hill?" "Ah! it will save the Reverend, now he has got old, and can't walk except on level ground."

Esther saw that this irritated Michael, and that he was about to speak: and she put her hand upon his arm, and in a low voice, said, "I would not speak now to such a man." "Thank you," said Michael, *(smiling.)* But Mr. Walker was not without a champion, for the old man of the toll gate knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and slipping his arms under his coat behind, said in a fierce tone, "If it does save the reverend, now he has got old, oughtn't we all to be glad? For my part, I hates the man that forgets a good turn. Pray, Mr. Sawyer, who paid your doctor that year that you had the rheumatiz fever? Who used to come with the heaps of nice things to your cottage? You seem to have thrown all the favours to the ash heap." "Me!" "Yes, you Mr. Sawyer: if you have forgot, we haven't. I never had any thing the matter at my cottage, but his kind face was sure to be at the window: and his little ones, when they could but just run about; haven't I seen Miss Sophy—and let me see how old

she was—I think, James, you were nine years old when she was born; and you were thirteen, when you got that hurt. Why, you see, she cou'dn't be more than four, and she used to come with her little frock up round her, and the bundles of rag for you: for, though the nursery maid was with her, she would bring something. Now I know what I think, nothing bites so keen as benefits forgot. Master Shakespeare said that many years ago. Don't you remember, Jem, your grandfather used to sing that song? 'Blow, blow, thou winter's wind.'" "Yes, I do remember very well, father; and a fine song it was." "Yes, it is better than all your Talianos; because you see there is a lesson to it, if we do but remember it."

By this time the shower was over. Michael thanked the turnpike man for his shelter, and left him something to drink. He looked extremely hard at him, as he thanked him, and asked him if he did not belong to the Kemp family? He replied, "Yes; that he was Michael, the eldest son," thinking it best to satisfy the man's curiosity, that he might get on to his journey's end. They pursued their way, and Michael drew up to the door of his father's cottage, which unfortunately was locked. "What shall we do now, Esther?" At

length they resolved to go over the way to Mrs. Potter's, to get a dish of tea, and to keep watch for the arrival of the little ones. This they did; but scarcely had they drank their second cup, when they saw a neat, careful-looking woman come to the cottage door, with a child on either hand; and pulling the key out of her pocket, closed the door after her. So, after they had finished their tea, Michael took up a small parcel in his hand, and calling to the ostler, begged he would be careful of his horse for the next two days; as, on the following Tuesday, it would have a long journey. They then crossed over to his father's cottage.

The good woman stared when he addressed her. "Thank you, Mrs. Spencer, for your kindness to my brother and sister; I expect my mother home early on Tuesday; till when, we can take care of the children." Mrs. Spencer remembered him, and wished him happy from her heart, for she knew the occasion of his mother's leaving home and curtsying to Esther, "You will be a happy wife, Ma'am, for Michael Kemp have always been a dutiful son to his mother, and I have always minded that be a sure sign." Esther modestly looked at him, and then at Mrs. Spencer, saying, "I have no fear."

In the mean time, they were endeavouring to make the children familiar, which was rather difficult, it having been long since their brother had been at home, and these little ones had never visited the Brow. "Suppose we have a walk," said Esther; and, before she went out, she took Mrs. S. aside, to enquire what might be most useful to the children, when it was found that a new bonnet for the little maid, and a hat for the boy, would be very acceptable; and Esther soon won their young hearts, by begging them to show her the way to the shop, and presenting them with these little offerings. Mary took upon her to guide Esther, to the new shop, where they sold every thing that was pretty. And Johnny very knowingly told Esther, that "his mother did not think the things so good there, as at some of the old shops;" and Johnny and Mary had nearly quarrelled in defence of their favourite places. It was, "Well, Miss, I have heard my mother say so;" and, in reply, "What can such boys as you know about shops?" But the contest ended delightfully, when each found themselves provided with a handsome covering for the head, at the very place in dispute; and as Mary boasted what nice things they sold, John owned they were better than

he expected; and Mary said, they were uncommonly pretty. "Ah, so they are; but how do you know that my sister has not paid too much for them?" "Oh," said Mary, with a sneer, "as if my sister did not know what to give for things;" and the word sister was spoken with so much endearment, that Esther could not find it in her heart to be angry.

The new bonnet and hat were sent home, and the little ones greatly delighted; and now, between the pleasure of the new dress, the delight of seeing brother Michael, and the new kind sister, the young things could hardly be persuaded to go to rest. Mrs. Spencer was not willing to leave her charge; and taking Michael aside, said, she thought her neighbour (i. e. Mrs. Kemp) would like best for her to stay, and boil the pot for them, and she should do it very willingly; adding, it would be awkward for Esther to find things. And Michael began to think his neighbour was in the right; so he thanked her for her good will, and strolled out that very evening, to give her an offering of gratitude; for he well knew this good creature would not accept any remuneration in money. For many a kind turn had his mother done neighbour Spencer, and she was pleased with the opportunity of

showing her gratitude. "*How many weighty services may one poor woman perform for another, and how many do they perform, services which no money can repay.*" We are poor creatures after all; and those attentions which touch us most nearly, those indispensable attentions in the hours of sickness and pain, are claimed alike by rich and poor.

The clouds had thickened since their return to P., and the night was stormy, the Sunday morning showery and unpromising; but, by the help of umbrellas and pattens, they reached the church of P. without difficulty; and Jane Kemp looked towards her mother's seat during the service, to see who was there; and hardly could the honest girl sit out the service for delight. And Michael had heard so poor an account of Mr. Walker at the turnpike, that he was agreeably surprised to find him in the pulpit, and hear him preach from those words of the Psalmist, "That whatsoever he doeth, it shall prosper." He drew so fine a line between the prosperity of the wicked and the prosperity of the righteous, their opposite hopes and fears, and closed with the abiding prosperity of those who trust a Saviour and that fine peroration, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,

nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." And now, as the congregation thickened in the porch, and one waited to pin up her apron, and another to put a handkerchief over her bonnet, Jane Kemp pressed through the crowd to welcome her brother Michael, and to speak to her new sister. But Johnny, with tenacity, kept his brother's hand, and scarcely suffered Jane to disengage him. "Oh, Michael, how are you, and how are they all at home?" and a hundred questions in a minute, as to when they came, and how long they would stay. As they passed down the path Michael had so often swept, he said, "Esther, my dear, this is your sister Jane." Kind looks were exchanged, and the welcome to P. was given. "I'll just run home, Michael," said Jane, "and get leave to come and wait on you to-day. You know, master never gives leave to go out on Sundays; but then he is so fond of you, and knows so well that you would do nothing improper, that I'm sure he would make no objections."

And now again Johnny took his place, while Jane ran home, for every thing that was kind and good was so associated with

the name of brother Michael, that the very children were ambitious of sharing his favour. But they were not destined to reach home without interruption; for, at the door of the Lion stood the redoubtable Mrs. Potter, and they were not able to pass her without manifest rudeness, which Michael could not practise. It was, "Oh, Mr. Michael, you are welcome to P.; well, some people are in luck. Who should ever have thought that I should have seen you driving a fine horse and gig!" Michael was on the point of saying, it was not his horse and gig, when Esther pressed his arm. Michael only replied, he hoped she was quite well. "Oh, quite well, she thanked him, better to live by spite than pity." Michael was about to inquire what she meant, when Esther again pressed his arm; a motion which he now completely understood, and he could not help commending her, as she walked on, and so passed to the cottage of the Kemps.

Neighbour Spencer had laid the cloth, and produced some nice cold beef from a neighbouring eating-house, which, with a rice pudding, made up the dinner. Michael was much pleased to see Jane's attention to Mrs. Spencer, and that she would not suffer her to clear away, but did every thing herself. He thought it becoming,

and took an opportunity of commending her, dwelling upon the kind attentions of their neighbour; and before he went away, he again expressed his gratitude to Mrs. Spencer for her goodness. "You must not think that I cleaned up any thing since your mother went; Jane would run down every evening to clean up. I don't know a cleverer or a steadier girl than Jane Kemp; she is mightily looked upon at the Rectory, I can tell you." Michael observed to Esther "what a blessing had rested on their family, that their father and mother had brought them up in the fear of God; and he could say, that whatsoever they had done it prospered—that he had no fear for any but poor Joe." Mrs. Spencer replied, "Why, poor Joe does very well, I'm sure, at the nursery; he earns his money, and goes on steadily."

Michael thinking it best not to lower his brother in the eyes of his neighbour, said he was glad to hear it, and the subject passed. Esther stayed at home in the afternoon, while Michael and the little ones went to church; and in the evening they all went up to the Rectory to Mr. W.'s lecture. After which, Michael had the pleasure of introducing his bride, and receiving blessings from his early friend. He found Mrs. Walker altered more than her hus-

band, and was delighted to perceive how dutifully their son and daughter conducted themselves. They were invited to spend the following day at the Rectory, and that they might have no interruption, and feel no embarrassment, Michael was in the library with Mr. Walker, and Miss Sophia took Esther into her mother's dressing-room. This quiet, unaffected girl, begged she might be employed in some way, saying, she was so used to work that she was really uncomfortable without something to do. "And now," said Mrs. Walker, "Mrs. Kemp, we are so fond of your husband, that you must tell us all about it;—how you were so happy as to meet with so good a husband, and he to find so nice a wife." So Esther, with her accustomed simplicity, told her story, and put Mrs. W. in possession of what the reader already knows.

"I am persuaded," said Miss Walker, "that if we were to cast our cares, mamma, more simply on God, we should find him directing the minutest of our concerns." "Oh, my love, I have always told you so." "Yes, mamma, you have indeed; but yet I don't know how it is, we never seem to take the experience of another." "Well, that is very true,

Sophia, and every generation knows somewhat of this: I can remember it myself, when my dear mother used to advise me, and I was not undutiful, Sophia, any more than you; yet I was too apt to think mamma viewed things through a dark medium, and yet surely there never was a more cheerful creature, nor one who looked on the world with a more loving eye. Alas! we sometimes see the excellencies of those we love too late." Sophia looked as if she would have said, "I am sure, mamma, I can see all your's;" and the returning look acquitted her of every thing but want of experience; and Esther understood it all, and began to esteem these dear friends, of whom Michael had so often spoken to her with that love and respect which they merited. She was trimming up a cap for Mrs. W., and it was done so neatly and handily, that Mrs. W. said, "I should like to have you for a milliner of all things." "Oh, ma'am, I wish it were not so far, I should like to work for you." "Well, my dear girl, this is very kind of you; you will think of me, and wish me well, I know; and let your prayer be directed for me to the throne of mercy, that the truths I believed in my health may be my support in age, when the silver cord is loosed, and

the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern; then when this dust shall return to the earth as it was; then pray for me, that my spirit may return happily to God who gave it." It was too much for Sophia; the tears were streaming down her cheeks, and she said, "O my dear, my precious mamma, don't talk so." "My love, my dear Sophia," replied her mother, in all the beautiful parts of the Monument of Parental Affection, none ever struck me as so beautiful as that part where the excellent Joshua says, 'As we must all die, I think it unhappy when a man is approaching death, that either he or his friends should fear to make it the subject of conversation; to meditate and speak upon it is a duty even in the days of health.'"

"Too, too true, dear mamma, but I often wish I might be allowed to escape death, or rather that I might so pass from time to eternity as to take all my dear friends with me, never to experience the pang of separation. After having loved you, my dearest father, and my beloved brother, as I do love you, to think of being separated; oh, I cannot bear the thought." "Well, my precious girl, leave it, 'sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' But Sophy," said her mother, twisting the ringlets of

her hair between her fingers, " is there not some other person whom you would be very sorry to leave?" " Yes, you little sly mamma; there is certainly, and what harm?" " None at all, my precious girl." Esther connected this with the story she had heard at the Turnpike, but she went on without betraying any symptoms of understanding what was said. " How long are we to have you here, Mrs. Michael?" enquired Mrs. W. " O, ma'am, we take leave to-day; we must be off early to-morrow, for our business requires us, and we left company at home." And now Esther enquired respecting Jane, saying, that their neighbour had given her an excellent character. " And she well deserves it," said Mrs. W., " she is quite a Kemp." " It is a great advantage, ma'am," said Esther, modestly, " to have good parents." " Ah, it is indeed," answered Sophia; " we shall never be aware of the advantage till we compare the effect of irregular principles." Esther then mentioned the Jennings family, and observed, that without any particular vice, they were always uncomfortable and unhappy, and yet they were not wanting in affection; there was a feeling of kindness. " Yes, yes," replied Mrs. W., " this is all the cry of nature, but there is no Christian rule

teaching to bear and forbear, no plan going out in acts of kindness and consideration for others; it is all with impulse, soil without culture." Mrs. W. enquired if Esther was not the niece of a worthy man who had called there some time since, and had gone on some business to a person who kept a public-house in that place? "Yes, madam," said Esther, "it was my uncle; he knew Mrs. Potter's uncle, and now I think of it, he desired me to enquire how she was going on. She spoke to us in a very rough odd way."

Mrs. W. I believe she goes on much as usual, we see nothing of her at church, and her distiller and her brewer have, I believe, set her up again for their own benefit. I hear she is obliged to give in her accounts every Saturday, and has only the pleasure of keeping a public-house for her pains.—"Dear me," said Esther, looking up with natural astonishment, and Mrs. W. seemed to join in her wonder.

Sophia. "But, mamma, if no one were to keep a public-house, would it not be very inconvenient?"—(*Mrs. W.*) "Certainly, my love, I can perfectly suppose a public-house to be kept without any excess." "How could that be, mamma?" "Not without a man in it, my dear, and that man a resolute as well as a worthy cha-

racter. In the first place, he must determine never to draw beer, or give liquor to a person who has had enough; and he must show some particular kindness in other ways to those whom he thus offends; he must always shut up at ten o'clock, and whatever he refuses must be refused in a spirit of gentleness, to convince the persons that the refusal was for their benefit; and they have so many ways of doing good, they might sell at an under rate those provisions which they could no longer produce to their customers; they might employ them about the yard or stables; in short, there are many ways in which a publican may be kind, as they are in the midst of a profusion of the good things of life."

"But, my dear mamma, they must pay for them as well as other people." "True, Sophia, but then they would spoil if they were kept; in short, love, I think that there is no possible situation in which a man is exempt from glorifying God. I know two instances in point. Many years ago, a friend of mine came late to a village inn, and had little hope of being admitted, for they had tried at several without success, and the rain came down in torrents. They were in an open carriage, and began greatly to fear they should get no shelter.

A clown, whom they met upon the road, kindly offered to conduct them to one where he was almost sure they would get a bed. The doors were all closed, but they observed a light in a small room which formed an angle of the building, and clearly distinguished a woman kneeling. I heard my friend say, that amid the darkness of the heavens and the descending showers, and their almost hopeless exposure, the sight of this calm devotion was interesting and affecting beyond measure. On the following morning, my friend spoke to the landlady, expressing pleasure and surprise at her employment, when the landlady replied, 'I can see no reason why one may not pray in a public-house as well as any other.' There was great truth in the observation; it would be well if it were more generally prevalent.

"Another instance may be adduced of a highly respectable woman, who keeps a very large inn, and in every sleeping-room is placed a Bible, and the whole business of that house is conducted upon those principles; and it was the beautiful observation of the landlady, '*there is room for Him in the inn.*' Certainly the disadvantages are great, but not insuperable." Just here the door opened, and the servant said, "Mr. Walker would be glad to speak with

Mrs. Kemp;" and Miss Sophia accompanied her to her father's study. He kindly extended a hand to her, and said, "I must consider you, my good girl, as a part of my flock; your good man here is so natural to us all, that we feel a right to an interest in all that concerns him." Esther could only bow and look down modestly, for her heart was too full to speak. "The ways of Providence, my children, are wonderful, and if our paths are chequered with sorrow, they may be always traced to our sins. Remember, afflictions rise not out of the dust, he doth not willingly afflict. Whence come wars and fightings? In short, I could multiply instances to prove, that were not sin in the world, there would be no sorrow; and that if we desire to live quiet and peaceable lives, we must live in all godliness and honesty. It is a generally received opinion that man is born to trouble, and so he is; but wherefore? Because his nature is sinful, his habits sinful, and require the chastisements of a Father. But, alas! his stripes are fewer than our crimes, and lighter than our guilt. I feel great delight, my young friends, in vindicating the ways of God to man, and in proving to you, that if it were possible to lead a sinless life, it would be a life of unabated felicity. Yet

there is one sorrow that every heart must experience—a sorrow which our dear Lord drank deeply, the contradiction of sinners. We must endeavour so to conduct our little bark through the waves of this turbulent world, as to give as little occasion of offending as may be. But, my dear young friends, rely upon it, however for a time the sunshine of prosperity may cheer your path, there is that hatred in the world to all that is holy, that even your careful walking will be an offence, your religion hypocrisy, and you must get yourselves, in these hours of sorrow and affliction, to your strong hold. Now observe the blessing whereunto you may always resort."

The reader will, perhaps, think there was something gloomy in this address of Mr. W.'s, and that he was anticipating evil, when he should have only touched gay subjects; but the fact was, he was not well; he had experienced ingratitude from those he had obliged, and he looked upon Michael as an untried voyager, and was willing to prepare him for the ills of life. We do not pretend to defend this anticipation of evil, but it is natural to the experienced voyager to point out the shoals and the quicksands. But it was evident that Sophia, the young and lively Sophia, thought that papa looked on life with a

gloomy eye. She looked on Michael, and said, " Poor dear papa, he has not been well lately, Mr. Kemp." " My dear child," replied her father, " I am much better; and it is not as you think, Sophy, illness, that makes me give this caution to my young friends; as yet, they are fair weather sailors." Esther shook her head. " Well, if not," said Mr. W. smiling, " at least, my dear, you have borne the yoke in your youth."

By this time Mrs. W. joined them, and Sophia said, " Dear papa is very low to-day, mamma." His dear wife sat down by him, took his hand in hers, and in a voice heard by none but her beloved partner, whispered, " As thy day is, so shall thy strength be." And again, " I will strengthen thee, and uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Their time passed now in communications upon the part of Michael, on some little disagreeables in his parish: his farm lay at a distance from the others, and as the reader well knows, it was hilly; and, in the late determination to repair the roads, some of the farmers had observed that the road to Mr. Kemp's farm was of no good to any but himself; and then another said, that it was making them a quarter of a mile of road to go to see Mr. Kemp. " But then,"

said young Mr. Jennings, "Mr. Kemp is such a good man; it is honestly worth the money."

Perhaps the reader may have felt that, of all things, to bear a sneer is the hardest, and Michael felt it so: he never had assumed any thing to himself; he never had looked down upon others; and, why they should be so very spiteful he could not understand. "Not understand that! why, I thought, Michael, you had read your Bible," said Mr. Walker. "Yes, Sir, I hope I have." "Well, Sir, it is there written, "*If a man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution.*" "One of my poor old workwomen, Sir," said Michael, "wanted relief from the parish, and they could not even let her pass: it was, 'Dear me, *you* want relief of the parish. I thought these *godly gospellers* always provided for their own. Surely Mr. Kemp forgets: we had a fine sermon a Sunday or two ago about that.' And then Mr. Jennings put in his word again. 'So, Goody, you see that they who preach the Gospel are to live upon the Gospel.' I bore it in silence, but the poor old woman could not. 'Well, Sir, what do you hope to live upon?' Just then Mr. Lascelles entered: they were hurrying business over, that they might settle with-

out him; but no sooner did he take his chair, than the tone was somewhat altered; but the old woman, who knew her strength when the dear Reverend came in, was resolved to make them ashamed, and continued, 'I should *think*, gentlemen, that you all hoped to live upon the Gospel; my Bible tells me, that *there is no other name given*.' 'What's all this, Dame Jenner?' said Mr. Lascelles, rising; I then spoke, for I thought I could explain it better. 'It seems to be the wish of the parish, Sir, that I should provide for my own poor; and, if this is general, it will come to the same thing, I suppose.' 'Undoubtedly,' said Mr. Lascelles; 'but it is an unheard of proposition, I believe.' 'True,' said Mr. Jennings, 'but Mr. Kemp is an uncommon man.' And now I am almost ashamed to tell you, Sir, what this kind friend said; but I am quite aware, that he did it with a view to keep up my spirits, for he saw I was hurt. 'I quite agree with you, Sir; and as you so justly appreciate his merits, Mr. Jennings, I hope you will endeavour to imitate him.'" "Ah, I can fancy Lascelles when he said this. There is no man like him for putting down impertinent people. But he had not quite finished: 'I hear with concern, gentlemen, that some of you are capable of turning the sacred truths of our

holy religion into ridicule. Some sneer at the word "Gospel," others, at being "born again." Gospel, gentlemen, means glad tidings; hopes of salvation to lost, undone sinners. Being "born again," means that change of heart and of life, without which our Saviour himself assures us, 'No man can enter the kingdom of heaven.' Now, to be capable of jesting with such awful truths, proves a state of extreme depravity. Oh, never may I hear, never again, I trust, that those, over whom God has placed me, are capable of jesting with their eternal hopes;' and he seated himself, and there was a silence of some minutes before the business of the day went on."

"You see, my good young man," said Mr. Walker, "you have been prosperous, and for a time all was well; indeed, I have heard in a roundabout way from your sister Jane to Sophy, from Sophy to mamma, and from mamma to me, that these Jennings' were not unwilling to share your prosperity, but that you had too much discretion either to link yourself, or to permit Joe to form a permanent connection with persons whose piety was at least doubtful; and as this was the case, they are not only prejudiced but mortified." Michael shook his head, and said, he was sorry

Jane should trouble them with his trifling concerns.

"Nay," said Mrs. Walker, "you must not blame Jane; we are always glad to hear how you are going on, and I often say myself, "Well, Jane, what news from the Brow?" "That was a very foolish affair. Sir, you know my brother Joseph has not much sense, poor fellow." "Well, Sir, you must not be surprised when you disappoint people, especially prejudiced people, that they should retaliate, and at least endeavour to make you feel a portion of that spleen that rankles in their own bosoms. I have frequently been led to compare a prosperous person to a young child: as soon as it begins to take notice, we are delighted with its infant ways; and we love to see the little patting feet upon the floor, and to hear the sound of its melodious voice; and when it has learnt to combine and furnish a sentence, all it says is witty and well meant; but when it reaches its fourth or fifth year we begin to look for a little study, for obedience; it must no longer run on and be listened to, and we forget that the poor little traveller is walking in nature's road, the very road in which we have encouraged its footsteps. Now it is really wrong to be angry at the folly we have fostered, but if the dear infant

has stood all this prosperity, and is not to be spoiled by this unqualified indulgence, we are certainly called upon to love it unreservedly. But its brothers and sisters feel that they have the same claims, the elder ones more, and the young ones are slipping into his very place. Thus it is, a popular man appears, every one makes way for him, and the breath of praise follows him. He can hardly do wrong if he has sense, and above all, if he has piety, he bears it meekly, and is not the worse for the adulation. But there is a time when this also must pass, and they expect either to share his pleasures, or that he should resign his high place. If, like the spoiled child, he bears it loftily, he is sure to suffer; and if, like the meek child, he takes it patiently, he must nevertheless resign his popularity, and give way."

"I thank you, Sir, for this lesson. I feel its truth, we shall fatigue you.—I think, Esther, we must be going." Farewells were exchanged, and the blessing of his early friend rested on him.

It would be endless to describe all that passed at the cottage; how the little ones would fain see the Brow, and hoped brother Michael would let them come some day; and the thanks to their kind neighbour, &c. &c. But one thing we must no-

tice. Mrs. Potter would not suffer them to depart without a short interview; she had by some means learned who Esther was—that she was niece to that very Mr. Brownrigg who had thwarted her schemes, and was the particular friend of her uncle's housekeeper. This was the more offensive, as Mrs. Potter had high ideas of the rights of relationship, and considered their property, whether acquired or inherited, justly due to the next heir; and though a slight curve in her own favour, from any other person would have been passed over as irremediable; in the present case, it was a sin not easily pardoned: she forgot her delinquencies, and wondered any one else should remember them. If any person reminded her, that she had not behaved well to her uncle or to Mrs. Tucker, she would toss her head, and say, "Young people would be young people; and she had always *a witty tongue, worse luck*."

But to return: she waylaid Michael and Esther, and though they passed on the opposite side, she nevertheless contrived to cross them, for she clearly saw that neither Esther or Michael wished to recognise her; so, with a boldness natural to persons of her character, she began. "Well, Mrs. Kemp, so you was a Miss Brownrigg, I find. Pray, how's your uncle?

Please to tell him that I shall do remarkably well, though I have been cheated out of my rights. Thank God, I have got friends as well as another." Esther could make no reply, for she did not understand it. "You have heard your uncle talk of me, I dare say?" "No, ma'am, never." "No? why that's very particular, I think, but that's no matter—Well, you please to tell him from me, that though I am defrauded of my just dues, I am going on remarkably well; but it seems the fashion now-a-days for servants to get into their master's places." Michael was too well used to Mrs. Potter to reply to this; and, though he perfectly understood her insinuation, he passed it as though he had not heard it. He walked forward to the stable to see to his horse, and Esther curtseyed, and went in to her father's cottage: she did not close the door, lest it should be said she had shut the door in her face; but she went in, and she heard Mrs. Potter say, "The manners of the *canal*;" she had picked up this bit of French from the captain, when he had lodged at her house: it was lost upon Esther, who knew nothing of the French tongue, and she only heard a sort of muttering, and saw the angry gestures of the displeased landlady.

We will not fatigue the reader with all

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the adieus of the little people, or the kind wishes of neighbour Spencer, but we will join the travellers as they were ascending the steep to the Brow. "And here they are," said Betty Smith.—"Here's my master, ma'am," half opening the door where Mrs. Finch was sitting. And now the little chit-chat of what had passed on both sides occupied them while they took their tea; for though it was nearly eight on the Tuesday evening ere they reached their home, it was not so late but Esther said, "Oh! I must run down, Michael, and speak to my mother." "Well, as soon as I have seen to my horse, I'll run with you." "Just one cup of tea, Michael." "Oh, I don't mind my tea; I must see to my horse, the poor beast has travelled well."

And now, reader, fancy the first meeting of the mother and aunt, with their darling Esther. It was, "Well, love, and so you are safe home, and I am glad to see you." "Yes, mother, and I hope you will often see me; you must come to the Brow to us, we shall think it a dull day that you do not look in upon us. "Hetty, love, 'tis a steep hill, I think you must run down to us. And so you've seen every body, dear, all Mr. Kemp's relations?" "Yes, and I have seen his good Reverend, and Mrs. Walker, and Miss; they are the

kindest people." "Well, you are a happy girl, Esther, and I am glad to see it, dear." "And to share it, my dear mother," said Michael, looking with kindness." "Why, that can't be long, Mr. Kemp, you know, we ben't young." "Dear mother, don't try to make my heart ache, pray don't." "Now?" said Margaret Beal; "you are wrong. If your mother is a Christian—" "*If*," said Esther." "Yes, *if*," said her aunt, "if your mother's a Christian, what have you got at the Brow; nay, what is there in all this world that's to be compared with her inheritance? Did not the dear Saviour tell us, that it had not entered into man's heart to conceive the glory. Do you believe what he says, Esther?" "Dear aunt, *do* I believe? sure I do." "Well, if that *is* sure, you can't grieve that your mother and I draw near our inheritance." "But nature, aunt—nature will have way." "Ah!" said Margaret, "don't I know it? Don't I feel it, child?" But this I must say, I don't give way to it —no, I try every day to loosen my affections from you and your mother, and to lay hold by faith of the hope set before me looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher; and I do find, my child, that my prospects brighten, but I often think of what that good man, Mr Romaine, says, 'Nay,

but thou dost *not* believe. Could a condemned malefactor with a pardon in his pocket fear condemnation?' We certainly live below our hopes, or death could have nothing gloomy for the Christian; my prayer is a very short one, and often repeated—Lord, increase my faith." Now, though this was calculated to cheer the heart in a Christian point of view, it did not cheer poor Esther. It was true, she was settled happily in every way, but she and her mother had struggled so many years together for the necessaries of life, that they certainly became more endeared than most parents and children are, however tender that tie.

And now, when the struggle was no longer needful, to think of separation, she could not bear it; she was almost ready to long for her old cares, provided she might keep her old comforts. Thus it is, we find trials heavy at the time, and almost overlook the accompanying mercies; they pass us, we fancy them light, and almost wish them back again. "Well, good night, good night, dear friends;" and they reascended to their dwelling, thoughtful and prayerful.

When Michael felt how this little interview had depressed Esther, he was almost sorry he had taken her; and he said,

" The painful trial, my love, will not come one moment the sooner; let us enjoy the present." She could only say, " Yes," for her heart was very full. It is somewhere said, " It is not on hearts that yield the soonest, that sorrow makes the deepest impression;" and this is well, for what frame could stand ready and continued impression. No, we are mercifully formed of various moods, and our trials suited to our temperament; yea, even as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

On the following morning, Mrs. Finch, Jemima, and Esther, were delighted to see Fanny ascending the Brow, and with a merry little curtsey, " Glad to see you, my dear Mrs. Kemp; come to pay the bride a visit. Rely upon it, you will have people to call, and I am come first." " People to call?" said Esther. " Yes, my dear; I think my news is true; I heard that the Jennings's were all coming up this morning." " Very well," and she went on with the work she had in her hand. " Are these your neighbours, Mrs. Kemp?" said Mrs. Finch. " Yes, madam, they are the daughters of a farmer here, a man who has done very well; but the times, and one thing or another, have injured their property." " The times have

been hard indeed," said Mrs. Finch, " but they have been made harder by want of management, I believe; pretty many of us have stepped a little out of our station, and, instead of being farmers, have tried to be gentlefolks; and really this is hardly to be excused, for our station is so very comfortable. And why should we wish to be dressed up, Mrs. Meredith; for my part, I am never so comfortable as in my every day clothes: if one is but clean, it is all one can desire." " True, ma'am, but I think young people do like to be dressed; I am sure I can't forget, some years ago, when good Mrs. Walker fitted me out to come to you. How very much pleased I was; and now, to be sure, I don't care about such things, but there is a great deal of difference. I do believe Miss Jemima never did care for dress." " Different people have different snares," said Jemima, " but I am not coming to confession." " You were a good little girl, and we all liked you very much, and were very sorry to part with you," said Mrs. Finch. " Dear, kind mistress," and she kissed Mrs. Finch's hand. There is something very endearing in genuine affection: the heart is hard indeed, that is not touched by it.—" But see," said Mrs. Finch, " are not these the ladies from

the Rectory? Is not that Mrs. Lascelles coming up the hill?" "Dear me, no," replied Fanny, "Mrs. Lascelles never comes out, her health is so very delicate." "Who can they be, then? and they are very near." "Oh," said Esther, "it is the Miss Jennings'." "The Miss Jennings'! and who are they? Oh, I remember the ladies you expected; these are specimens truly." And now the stiff rapper sounded; stiff, I say, for it was rarely used at the Brow. "Is Mrs. Kemp at home, Betty?" and Betty was heard to reply, "Yes, ma'am," and the ladies were ushered in to the large parlour, and Betty went to tell her mistress, who was seated in the small room with Mrs. Finch and Miss Jemima. "You will go in with me, will you not?" said Esther, "for I shan't know what to say." "Oh! we will all go in, if you like it," said Mrs. Finch. "We had better drop in one by one," said Jemima, "we shall frighten them, such a party at once." "Not so soon frightened, I assure you," said Fanny. So it was settled, that Esther and Fanny should go in first, and Mrs. Finch and Jemima should drop in afterwards.

The bride had her little quilled cap, with a plain white ribbon crossed at the top; her clear book muslin handkerchief,

her checked muslin apron, her small corded buff-striped gown, short sleeves with a narrow ruffle. Her mother had brought her up to this dress, as she could then dip her hands into any thing without soiling her clothes; so that, with the help of a very large pincloth, Esther could be able to do any thing in the house, and yet be ready to see her customers in one minute.

In this simple dress the bride entered her parlour. Miss Jennings had a small hat and feather, and her very pretty hair done in hundreds of curls. Miss Tiny had a very elegant veil over a neat straw bonnet tied with pale blue ribbon. Miss Amelia Jennings had a feather in her straw bonnet. They had all parasols, coloured silk spencers, and plenty of black ribbon round their ancles. They talked of the heat, and produced very elegant fans, which they flirted with a grace.

"Happy to see you looking so well, Mrs. Kemp," said the eldest Miss Jennings. "I fear you have found the weather very unpleasant," said Miss Tiny, "during your *tower*. Where was you in that horrid storm?" Esther replied, with her native simplicity, "we stopped at a turnpike-gate, ma'am." "You have been to Bath, I think, ma'am," said Miss Jennings. "No, ma'am, we have been to Mr. Kemp's

father's." "Dear me, Tiny! what stories people do tell!" "And good people too," said Tiny. Wasn't it James Brown that told us Mrs. Kemp and her husband were here?" "That was very true, ma'am," said Esther; and here the three ladies had much difficulty to keep their countenances. It struck them as very remarkable, that any person should go visiting to a house where nobody was at home; and they could not refrain from enquiring if they understood rightly that Mrs. Kemp was at the Brow, while they were at P. "Quite right," said Esther; and Fanny, seeing Esther was at a loss, in her own merry way told the story. "My father and my mother came to my brother's wedding; you must remember that, Miss Jennings, for I believe you were there." Miss Jennings bowed, and did not look very sensible. "My mother left a kind-hearted neighbour to take care of my young brother and sister at home. She remained here till Monday morning, when she left us. You, my dear Mrs. Kemp, I believe left P. in the beginning of the day; for I think you said, you met my dear father and mother at a little distance from the fifteenth mile stone?" "Yes," said Esther, very quietly. "Oh! I beg your pardon," said Miss Jennings, "I thought

you had been to Bath, or some such place. Is P. a very pretty place?" "Oh, very pretty," said Fanny, "full of such beautiful trees." "Is there any assembly there, or a play-house?" "Oh dear, no; and if there was, of course we should not go there." "Why, you do not think there is any harm, do you, Mrs. Kemp?" "To me, madam, it would be wrong." "Well, for my part," said Miss Jennings, "it always does me good, for one learns such uncommon fine lessons against all that is wrong. Shakespeare, and Gray, and Lord Byron, and Hudibras, that wrote "the School for Scandal." Oh, that Charles! he's a delightsome creature! and then his brother pretending to be so good!—such a hypocrite! I dare say you remember Mrs. Kemp?" "I do not, indeed." At this moment, to the relief of all parties, Mrs. Finch came in. Mrs. Finch was of that quiet order of beings, asserting nothing, claiming nothing; yet, with a rational, consistent mind, acting in a firm plain manner, possessing a fine person rather above the common size, what you would call a comely woman, and whose years seemed to claim the privilege of respect, and was allowed to be what her departed brother called her, "a nice woman." Her steady walk to her seat, in

the midst of Miss Jennings's communications, seemed to put a damp upon them, and to raise the spirits of Esther; for Fanny was of that playful turn of mind, that has a keen sense of the ridiculous, and she had been mischievously disposed to bring the conversation forward again. So she said, "These ladies, Mrs. Finch, were speaking of the advantages of the theatre, and of what fine lessons are to be learned there. What do you think?" "For my part," said Mrs. Finch, "I am no judge; I never was at a play, I had always something else to do; my father had a very large farm, and my brother, when I lived with him, you know, had this farm. I was always obliged to be up very early, to see after the servants, and indeed to work for myself, as all farmers' daughters must. So, by the time gentry were going to the play, I was thinking of going to bed." The Miss Jennings looked rather queer: it bore hard upon their own station; and however Miss Jennings and Miss Amelia might feel, Miss Tiny, with an undaunted flippancy, began. "That might be the fashion in your days, ma'am, but we were brought up quite different; I never liked farming business for my part, and couldn't make a bit of cheese or any thing of that sort." "I suppose your land is

arable?" said Miss Jemima. "No indeed," said Miss Tiny, "there's plenty of butter and cheese made on our farm." Mrs. Finch, when she was stirred by any thing which she thought really wrong, could give a plain lecture with very good sense, and it struck her regular mind in a most blameable point of view, that young women without any property should be brought up to do nothing. So she said, "I cannot tell of what use the present mode of education of farmers' daughters may prove, but it strikes me that it can only lead to poverty and distress. Farmers' sons must be afraid of marrying a wife who can bring them no money, nor help to get any. Gentlemen would not, of course, marry the daughters of their tenants, if they did it could not make either party happy. If they marry tradesmen, and know nothing of trade, they can be of no use; and however kind a husband may be to his pretty wife for two or three months, before the first year is over he will begin to wish her to be of some use. I have heard Mr. Cooper say, that our good Creator formed us all to do something. The farmer's wife ought certainly to know how every thing should be done, if she does not do it; a tradesman's wife should serve in the shop. A gentleman's wife

should know more than I can name; she should be quite a companion for him, my dears, and that's what no farmer can afford to have his daughter taught."

This quiet sensible speech had the effect of silencing the party except Miss Tiny, whose levity was incorrigible. "I should think, ma'am, every body knows their own business best; my pa and ma always wished us to be happy. I have often heard pa say, young people would be young people; time enough for sorrow, when the black ox treads on your toe. Pa never liked to see us moping; and ma always said, she loved her girls to see the world;—didn't she, Lou'y?" Miss Lou'y was too deeply offended, she only bowed her head, and looking at something which hung before her, whether watch or not I cannot say, pretended that the time she could spare was elapsed, and with many dignified bends and elegant tosses of her head, she bade adieu to Mrs. Finch and the ladies, only turning to Mrs. Kemp, hoped they should be good neighbours; and away tripped the Miss Jennings's.

Mrs. Finch, with her arms folded, sat musing, at last exclaiming, "Poor silly, very silly young creatures! I do pity you. Do you know, my dear," turning to Mrs. Kemp, "if the report I heard was true,

that their father was got very low in the world?" "No, madam, I really do not know; I never saw these young ladies more than two or three times, once when they wished to employ me about some dresses, and once at my marriage, when you may remember they came to church." "Yes, indeed, I do, and thought it very indelicate." Mrs. Finch's visit continued only a few days after Michael's return; she had promised Fanny to spend one day there, and it was pleasing to see the neat happy young creature receiving her old mistress. There was no pretension, there was no apology; she gave the best she had to offer, and by one of those unaccountable propensities in children, for which it is impossible to assign a cause, the little Fanny, hitherto as shy as possible, clung closely to Mrs. Finch and Jemima.

Some long-headed parent might have foreseen future advantage in this infantine endearment; but Fanny's simple mind built no castles for her baby, she only said, "I must bring her up, ma'am, to wait on you; aunt Kemp must teach her to plait your caps, and I must make her a tidy maid." But not to dwell on trifles, we must bid farewell to Mrs. Finch, and allow her to return to her well ordered home, and passing a few months

with the new wedded pair, must visit Brownrigg in his cottage. It was furnished with great regard to comfort, and as a part of its furniture, his neat little maid Peggy was brought down to the country. It was late for Brownrigg to begin new habits, and at one time it was feared he would have returned to his villa at Walworth; he wanted his little bit of fish, his porter, his hot roll in the morning, and Peggy was but an indifferent bread maker; but these difficulties were removed one by one, and his gentle Esther was such a load-stone, and little Michael Meredith his daily visitor, outweighed the sensual part, so that by degrees he forgot the inconveniences of his new residence, and settled quietly down.

It was about eight months after the marriage of Michael that Brownrigg, with Meredith's boy on his knee, was sitting at the Brow, and the child, with the confidence of infancy, had fallen asleep in his arms, the clock struck eight, and the servants, in a quiet state of expectation, were waiting the prayer bell; and Michael, from a mixed motive, forbore to ring. Brownrigg, with innocent yet mischievous drollery, kept his seat, wondering in his own mind how Michael would act. He had never been placed in these circum-

stances before; it is true, they had often knelt together at the throne of mercy, and Michael had read the prayer and the chapter when he was present, but then he had been requested to do so; he had never been the leader or director of the worship in Brownrigg's presence, fearful of offending "whom he wished much to persuade." He stood with uneasy hesitation, holding a pen which he had been mending against the clear evening light. Brownrigg turned round. "Well, Sir, you take some time to mend your pens." "No, Sir, but—" "Yes, but you are hesitating whether you shall admit such an infidel fellow as I am to worship God with you." Esther's heart yearned over her uncle, "Oh no, my dear uncle!" "Well, well," said Brownrigg, "more of this another time." "Now ring the bell, my good sir, and do not keep your servants wishing me out of your house."

Michael's mind was a little disturbed by this slight circumstance: it happened that the chapter in course was that where Daniel prayed three times a day, notwithstanding the prohibition of Darius; and an ironical smile played on the lips of Brownrigg. As soon as the prayer was over, William was ordered to take the young Michael down to the mill, not that there

was any anxiety on the part of Fanny, for he was so frequent a visitor to Brownrigg, and she so well knew his care and kindness, that her heart rested completely. But Esther thought it was late, and it would save her uncle that bit of road; so it was, "Good night, my man," on the part of Brownrigg, and a long drawn yawning "Good night, sir," on the part of little Michael.

Brownrigg went to his home, and a few evenings after, when they met again at his own house, the tea-things were no sooner cleared than he began. "And so, sir, you give me up as a decided enemy to all that is good and excellent." Michael, though not quite prepared for this attack, could not affect ignorance of his meaning; and, as he remained silent, Brownrigg went on. "But if you, sir, are indifferent whether I pray to God or not, I should have hoped my little Esther here would have no objection to meet her uncle in the kingdom of heaven." The tears fell fast from Esther's eyes; Brownrigg could not bear to see it; he got up, took her hand in his, pressed it, stroked it, and looked at her, and we may truly say, that Michael, like Nehemiah, prayed to the God of heaven. "I certainly," said he, "feel that I was very wrong, sir, in regarding the presence

of any man when a positive duty was in question; but if I did err, I can truly say it was through fear of assuming to teach one whom I much respect." "Yes, yes," said Brownrigg, "I know and feel that you do respect me; every part of your conduct, since we first met, proves it; but you do not, you cannot respect me upon a religious ground. Still, let me beg of you, do not think worse of me than I merit; do not suppose, because I have no family worship myself, that I wish to prevent you and Esther from doing what you think right. I think it a good custom, a very good custom, provided it is well conducted, and people behave as they should do before they kneel down, and after they get up; but to see a man flump down on his knees, full of evil tempers, and to hear him, as soon as he gets up, begin some conversation about this work-a-day world, I must say it is very inconsistent, and the prayer had much better be let alone. As for me, I am a pepper hot fellow, and I cannot answer for myself two minutes together." Here Michael ejaculated, "Who can." "Well, sir, with this conviction in my mind, how can I offer to play the priest even in my own house; in another man's it is different. I am rather supposed there to conform than to lead."

Michael. " But do you not think, sir, that it is a good thing to place a check upon our tempers by thus openly devoting ourselves every morning and every evening?" " Well, sir, it may be good, but I never yet thought it would be good for me; we are of different temperaments, some calm and composed like you, others boiling over every minute like myself." " But my dear uncle," said Esther, " God, who formed us, hears our prayers for the correction of every failing, and I know I have heard you say, you wished you were not so hot." " Why, Hetty, child, " I thought confession was a sacred thing, even in the Romish church." I just mention this little trait in Brownrigg's character, that the reader may see he was not bigoted to his own opinions, that he could listen and allow others to point out even his defects; and here he turned the conversation, by observing, that he was somewhat surprised by seeing what a train of servants they kept now; " why, I counted seven coming into family prayers the other night.' " Ah! that is all Esther's doings, sir," said Michael. " Well, my dear uncle," said Esther, " I must clear myself of extravagance; the truth is, we found it very difficult to have any command over the morals of those whom we only saw at in-

tervals, and Mr. Kemp has been a good deal distressed to find that our own out-door servants are even more immoral than those of our neighbours, and we have now determined to board all the single men in our own house; of course, we shall give lower wages. We now have a check which they cannot resist; and as it has been reported that our servants corrupted the whole village; we now hope that their example may be useful, for we certainly have a very steady set." "I suppose, sir, you are aware," said Michael, "that our servants are looked at with a very jealous eye, and that a small fault in them is sure to be made much of. I do not believe half that was laid to their charge was true, but not having them under my own eye, I could not contradict it."

"Have you heard how the Jennings' are going on?" said Mr. Brownrigg; "I am told that the old man is really much to be pitied; and his children are really a great trouble to him, a parcel of idle vain young people, and the poor wife looks worn down with care. I could but examine her pale features as she sat before me the other Sunday, and she walked out of church like a neglected thing, not one arm in the whole party was extended to her."

Michael. I believe, sir, the old man is very much attached to her, so I have heard Betty Smith say. (*Brownrigg.*) " Is it so? Well, I am glad of it; surely the mother of such a family must need it—must deserve it. I think there are six grown up, and I heard there were more young sprouts at a distance." (*Michael.*) " Yes, two or three at school." (*Brownrigg.*) " Well, what is to become of such a family brought up as they are." (*Michael.*) " I believe, sir, Mr. Jennings sees his error." (*Brownrigg.*) " Yes, yes, it begins to pinch now, that's the worst of it; we none of us see our errors till it is too late to amend them. For my own part, I cannot think what they propose to themselves. Why, don't you know, sir, that half the world, half the London world, I mean, rise in the morning without knowing where they shall lie down at night; at least, so says one who is supposed to have studied human nature well, ' thrown as it were upon existence by those ' whose irregular lives had plunged them ' into misery, without money, without ' friends, without education, with keen ap- ' petites, and strong passions; is it won- ' derful that vice and immorality should ' spread?' But these things are mending, sir; the schools and the societies will certainly do great things." " And yet, my dear

uncle," said Esther, "how they are opposed, how many ill-natured things are said about those who are exerting themselves most strenuously." "Why, my dear, it is much easier to find fault than to imitate, and if I like to be easy and quiet, and think of no one but myself, and some kind-hearted neighbour comes forward, and is endeavouring to do good to all around him, comparisons are made to my disadvantage, so that all I have for it is to pull down his fair name, and make out that he is doing nothing at all, or more than nothing, mischief."

Michael smiled; there was so much truth in the observation, that from that moment he entertained hopes of the candid open-hearted Brownrigg.

But we must visit our old friends at P., we must enquire after the first friends of Michael, whom we left in rather delicate health. Job said, "I would not live alway;" and many a delicate sufferer since has breathed language not dissimilar. And what do we learn when we see these pillars of the earth trembling, and the strong bowed down. We learn, that the word of the Lord abideth for ever; we are there told, that whether there be tongues they shall cease, and whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away; nevertheless

we have a sure word of testimony. But how the heart of Michael was wounded, and all within him was melted, when he was told his excellent friend was fast sinking in the valley. Never had his faith been so tried, or any event touched him so nearly; he was ready to say, "And I, whither can I go?" and he felt that he was wrong, that he had been making man his stay; and poor Esther could say little to comfort him, for she knew from universal testimony the worth of him whom he trembled to lose. The disorder, under which his excellent friend laboured, was not one which pulls down the pillars of the body at once, but gradually saps the foundation till the strong man yields. There were many ebbings and flowings—he was now a little better, and now again he drooped; and the eyes that derived light and brilliancy from his eye were often so suffused with tears, that they sought where to weep. How needful is it for the Christian to live in the habitual conviction, "he doeth all things well;" for however God may be pleased to listen to the prayer of his people to soften the pang of departure, and to permit faith to support us in that trying hour, he does not alter the chain of his providences, but he gives strength to bear whatever he is pleased to inflict. The spoiler

is in the world, and sin hath tainted all; and the bare idea, that we could not stand in his sight if he were to mark one sin of a thousand, should bend the haughty brow, and silence all reply; but "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Thus would Mr. Walker argue with his beloved wife, as she sat by the side of his sofa; she would sometimes say, "My love, I cannot give you up, I cannot feel resignation, and what is more, I cannot ask for it. I seem afraid of having my desires granted, and my treasure removed, and poor dear Sophy feels just as I do." The sufferer smiled on her faintly, "that is to say, my dear, that you are both rebels; and that, instead of supporting me in my weakness, you would bow me to earth again with your love and tenderness. Alas! you know not how I need you to encourage me, and how dark the path has been through which I have travelled lately; I can say, that this hath been my prayer, 'Lord, grant that I, who have preached to others, may not myself be cast away.'" "Oh, my love, can you doubt for a moment of your safety."—"My dear wife, I am very weak, and the enemy hath been very busy with me. He suggests very truly 'what have you suffered for your God? what have you endured? Son, remember that

thou, in thy life time, receivedst thy good things.' This text hath been a great affliction to me."

Mrs. Walker almost smiled in scorn as she said, "Get thee behind me, Satan? what have you suffered, indeed? The *laws* of the land have *protected* you. But have you not suffered the *cold look*, the *averted* eye, the *insolent sneer*, from your brother clergy? Have I not heard you say, that that proud Doctor, who shall be nameless, would scarely return your bow; and at the visitation dinner, when your bishop looked at you with kindness, and drank your health, this *insolent* man *stared* at you as though he were *astonished* that your superior should notice you. And what was all this for, my love, but that you *faithfully* preached that Gospel which was committed to you by him who shall ere long say to you, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'"

This good lady was fired with what she was saying, and her eye was lit up with unusual brilliance. Her husband smiled on her—"Why, this goes well, Sophia. I shall have your arm to the river's brink." This little speech sunk Mrs. Walker's ardour again, and he heard her faintly arti-

culate, " If it be thy will, let this cup pass from me."

About this time it had been purposed that Sophia should give her hand to Protheroe, who was coming down; but she wrote to him, entreating him to wave the subject for the present. " My dear friend," said she, " my heart is too heavy, the shadows of the valley are thickening fast around me; and though my body is in perfect health, my spirit has long seemed hovering on the brink of the grave. Could you see the melting weakness of my dearest father, you would feel with me, that it is next to impossible to smile in his presence; and I should feel it to be a poor return for all your affection to give you my hand with an averted eye, and a heart bursting with sorrow. No, my dear friend, I should think it was going against the will of Providence; ' there is a time for all things,' said the wisest of men, and surely this is a time to weep, not to rejoice. My dear mother too is so afflicted, that it would be cruelty to leave her while she is struggling in the midst of her grief for a smile; and, alas! how often in vain. No, my dearest friend, come and see us, it will cheer my father to look at you, for you know how he loves you; but speak not of

taking me away. I could not leave him, no, we must wait for happier seasons. I think you will agree with me, we seldom differ, and I feel assured you will well understand me."

Protheroe *did* understand her, he came down, but it was to visit his uncle—it was to watch by his side, to listen patiently to all his weakness, now to move the pillow, and now to relate something amusing—sometimes to become a listener, and to treasure from the lip of wisdom axioms of eternal moment; but never did he hint an expectation of the fulfilment of their promise, though the parting word at Christmas had been, "In May we shall see you;" and, as he pressed Sophia's hand, he said, "in May, remember;" but May returned, and we may truly say that neither Protheroe nor Sophia wished to accomplish that engagement. No, strange as it may seem, they were too much occupied by the decline of their aged friend to desire any thing but an alleviation of his sufferings.

As soon as Mr. Lascelles heard from Michael of the illness of this dear old friend, he was deeply interested; but when he heard of the state of his mind by a letter from his son, he said, "Oh, Mentoria! who can tell but a little conversation

might cheer him; and though he is a father in Christ, and I a young man, who can tell but I may be enabled to say something, to speak some word of comfort; at any rate, I will try," and Robinson was immediately in attendance; and ere the close of that day, they set out on their journey. It was indeed a cheering prospect to our venerable sufferer to have Protheroe at the head of his sofa, and his kind friend Lascelles by his side, with his hand in his, breathing consolation, and repelling all the fiery darts of the enemy with the rich promises of the Scripture. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, you know well that every truth you have preached is from the sure word of testimony. Take unto you the whole armour, my dear friend, the sword of the Spirit, and above all, the helmet of salvation. Do not wonder that those whom you have taught and instructed seem stronger than yourself; we have a subtle enemy, he well knows that in raising doubts in your mind, he attacks a city upon a hill. He well knows, that in endeavouring to sap the foundation of your faith, he wounds through you many a weak believer."

Here Mr. Walker shuddered, and his wife, who was all tenderness, feared that

Mr. Lascelles was touching the wounded part too closely, and she looked at Sophia in her own quick manner; but she was soon relieved, for this judicious friend raising his voice, as was his manner when his subject deeply interested him, "But there are more with us than they which are against us; and lo, I am with you alway even to the end. Alas, my dear friend, we do know and feel that we are encompassed with infirmities, but we have an High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of them: but as the bent and inclination of your whole life bears testimony that you have first been seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness, oh! suffer not these clouds to overshadow your peace."

Many conversations of this kind passed; nothing seemed permanently to comfort the sufferer, while the temptation of looking at himself and his evidences had force. But one morning, quite alone, while the house was totally still, and his dear faithful partner thought him asleep, he was revolving in his mind all the rich promises that are scattered up and down for the comfort of believers; and those words, "the rock that is higher than I," came over his mind with peculiar force and stability. It had long been his custom to follow and con-

nect the Scripture: thus, for instance, the word rock, "Moses smote that rock, and the water gushed out; the Israelites drank of that rock which followed them; that rock was Christ, the Rock of ages, of which Christ himself said, Whosoever falleth thereon shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder." And his prayer was, "Set my feet upon the rock, and order thou my goings."

In meditating thus for hours in the loneliness of a wakeful night, this good man found consolation; his disorder, though not in itself of a nervous kind, had weakened the nervous system, and he was sometimes convinced that his mental distresses arose from bodily weakness. "Surely," said he one day, "he who enabled Peter to walk upon the waters, as on a pavement of adamant; he who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, will be strength to my weakness; yea, he will uphold me in my weakness. And though I have lien among the pots, yet shall my soul be like a dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold."

Thus supported by stable scripture consolations, carefully watched by his medical friend, and nursed by the hands of love, this dear man continued, though in much

weakness, to comfort his family by his presence.

It was one morning after a night thus spent, that they were all assembled in the library, and Mr. Lascelles saying that he must return either on the morrow or on the following day, that our reverend friend, with his hand in Protheroe's, and Sophia with her little work, now and then laying it down and looking upon him, he said, "I have a strange proposal to make; I am so poor a creature, that I cannot long expect to keep my wealth; and how often have I censured misers for holding their bags till the last moment. I was thinking," said he, "Sophia," turning to his wife, "of inviting a man to rob me;" then pausing for a minute, and seeing that surprise and wonder sat on the face of each, he said, "Perhaps it might be as well to give it away, at least it would be more creditable to me, and I would do it now while I have legal people about me." All this was said so calmly and so gravely, that there was only one person in the circle who understood him; and this quickness of apprehension arose from his eye glancing upon Sophia. At the word treasure she instantly conceived his meaning, for he had often pressed her hand, and used this expression. Protheroe was in that

sort of state hardly knowing where his eyes should rest; when his uncle spoke of legal men, he thought he meant himself; he fancied he was about to make his will, but he looked at Sophia, and he saw her face crimsoned with blushes, and he began to comprehend it. But here the dear sufferer raised himself slowly on his couch. "My dear friend," said he to Mr. Lascelles, "you know that this young man has long been my son, like the twin brother of my dear Edmund, and he has wished to bind himself by a closer tie, and to become a kind guardian to one, who it is needless to say, is *very dear* to me; and I had intended myself to join their hands, to pronounce the nuptial benediction; but it seems otherwise ordered. As you are now here, I have a proposal to make to marry them by special licence in my sick room, that my soul may bless them before I die." "Oh, my dear father!" said Sophia, "it must not, cannot be." Protheroe also rose, and said, "My dear Sir, at such a moment I do not, cannot wish it." "Softly, children," said the dear good man, "I am not going to part with Sophy; here she must abide, Protheroe; that's one of my stipulations; but I have settled it in my mind, unless you have altered your's, my good Protheroe." "Oh, my

dearest uncle!" and here he looked at Sophia, as though he would have said, '*You* know it is *impossible.*'

There were difficulties attending the procuring of the special licence, and the time pressed; so it was at length determined they should go to church, and the ceremony should be again performed in the library, that the presence of the beloved father, might sanctify the scene. We may say, this was an affecting wedding, they rejoiced with trembling; Sophia and Protheroe were sincere Christians, and they both took the same view of the pathetic circumstances which hung over their union; they felt that they were eating of the Lord's passover with bitter herbs. Though it were to be wished that such seasons as these might be unclouded, yet, truly speaking, it is in harmony with the state of man, whose enjoyments and sorrows are so blended as truly to be called a chequered scene. The dear father felt this, and more than ever exerted himself to dispel that cloud which he knew his own sickness occasioned; and when they returned from church, they found him, with every thing around him, so arranged under his own direction, that but for his pallid hue and recumbent posture, one might have thought him well. And when he

joined their hands, his countenance wore such an air of tender interest as he said, " the Lord bless you," that even Mr. Lascelles shed tears.

Jane Kemp, who so far partook of the family character as to do most things well, came curtsying respectfully, and walking up to her mistress, as though she bore happy tidings, in a half whisper, said, " My brother Michael is come, ma'am." Mr. Lascelles caught the sound of the word Michael, and began to fear that something painful had occurred, in which he was concerned, and was greatly relieved when he heard her say, " Ma'am, my brother had such a desire to see master;" and Mr. Walker looking at his wife, said, " what is that, love?" " Our old friend. the blackberry gatherer," said Edmund, looking at Protheroe. " Well, this is pleasant," said one, " this is pleasant," said another, and he was welcomed by all from the heart. " Let us see him," said Mr. Walker. " As soon as he has taken some refreshment, take care of him, Jane;" and the bride rose and cut him a slice of cake. " It seems but the other day, Sophy," said Edmund, " that you and I were at Fanny Kemp's wedding, and here we are now at your's, my dear." Protheroe, who stood leaning over the back of Sophia's chair,

said, "And when are we to come to your's, Edmund?" "That I cannot say, I shall be very particular." A simper ran through the circle as he said this, and Mr. Lascelles looked on him with an enquiring eye. Edmund, who was not aware he was listened to by any but Protheroe and Sophy, looked a little put out by the general notice, and seemed to shrink into himself for a moment. "'Tis a very important change," said Mr. Lascelles, "and I blame no man for being particular, the colour of his life here, and it may be that which is to come depends upon it." Dear Mr. Walker, whose patient attention had been unbroken during the whole of this little converse, said, in soliloquy, "Ah! most true! most true!—What do we not owe to it?" and then looking at his wife, "Ah, Sophy, you know how in the early part of our union your kind hints were axioms, and your influence my guiding star; and all this," looking at Mr. Lascelles, "without any assumption of consequence." During this sweet compliment, the eye of Protheroe rested on Sophia, for he thought it highly probable that he should receive the same kind support from her principles which her father had received from her mother's: it is true, he had had a very different education, but then he was

greatly exposed in London. The society with which he chiefly mixed were men of talent, close reasoners, and popular men not wanting in a good opinion of themselves; standing high in public esteem, it was in this mirror they regarded their own characters; and though Protheroe was a different man, it is well known we are apt to take the colour of our converse from those among whom we mix; and a sort of consciousness hung over this good young man in his occasional visits to P——, as though it were a different atmosphere. It was all the language of the eye which he spoke now, and as we are privileged to read what passes in the heart, we will just inform our readers that he thought, "never shall the pride of masculine talent close my ear to the gentle whispers of feminine counsel. No, my sweet Sophy, I feel assured *you* will never improperly usurp; and far be it from me to shun so *gentle* a monitor." It may be necessary to explain in what way Mrs. Walker *could* counsel her husband.

Mr. Walker was the son of a very upright curate of a neighbouring parish, very much respected by all the neighbouring clergy; and the more so, as he did not go *too* far in religion. He brought up his three children with the strictest attention to economy, and transmitted his patrimony

to them untouched. All this was excellent in its place, and we may say of him, that he *shone*, but he did not *burn*; his religion had the *outward polish*, but it wanted the *inward warmth*; and while Mrs. Walker's father, with an *ample* fortune, could scarcely obtain *common* civility, old Walker was cited and admired by all his neighbours: and wherefore? simply for this reason: he called himself a high churchman. He acknowledged in the confession, that he had gone astray like a lost sheep; he read in the Lessons, that he must be born again, or he could not enter the kingdom of heaven; he prayed also, that God would not take his holy Spirit from him or his congregation.

He also read, that God gives his holy Spirit to them that ask it. In the ordination service he had joined in the prayer, for immediate influence; had paused with his fellow candidates for orders, as though they expected the blessing they sought; and yet, gentle reader, after all this, he would deny the influences of the Spirit, and despise the saints, as he called them, who *pretended* to expect it. Wonder not, reader, when you hear such a man called a high churchman: he was high, it is true, in his own opinion, and had it not been that his son's choice was a wealthy choice,

he would have made stout opposition to his union with Mrs. Walker. Wonder not that Mr. Walker's prejudices should yield, he is not the only man who has found some charm in seventeen thousand pounds, which was the sum paid with his young daughter. Not that Walker was mercenary, far from it; he was really liberal beyond his means, but then the idea of close union with persons whose principles he affected to despise, was to him no small sacrifice; they had nothing in common. Walker was a keen sportsman, Nugent thought it incompatible with the clerical character. Walker thought, if he preached a sermon on Sunday, visited the sick when they sent for him, and performed all the outward duties of the ministerial character, he had done sufficient, and might thank God that "he was not as other men were." Nugent was never satisfied with himself, but lived in the spirit of that text, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Yet, think not that the one was gloomy, or the other particularly happy; no, there was a craving ambition about Walker, while the humility of Nugent led him to a safe and happy dependance on a Saviour.

Young Walker saw enough of the composure and peace of Mr. Nugent's character to *respect* his principles, if he did not

at first adopt them; and Sophia Nugent was so convinced of the enquiring mind of her friend, that she had no fear, if once he saw light that he should close his eyes in darkness. Many a sweet lecture did he receive as they walked up and down the broad avenue that led to her father's house, with the Bible in her hand, and prayer in her heart; she would sweetly endeavour to persuade him, whom much she loved, that the outward forms were nothing without the inward spiritual grace, and that the death unto sin must be accompanied by a new birth unto righteousness.

I have been thus explicit, to clear this excellent person from an imputation which might naturally attach to her character. No; be assured she yielded the palm most cheerfully, and was delighted to see how rapidly conviction and conversion went hand in hand with him to whom she had given her heart. This has been a long digression, but Mrs. Walker, thus honoured and beloved by her husband, had as often sought his arm for strength, and yielded the needful support when her excellent husband required it at her hand. And now, in this lingering weakness, she was most consoling when all within, saving his trust in a Saviour, trembled to the centre. She was more valued, more beloved,

than even in those days when he led her to the altar, as his dear and happy bride.

Mr. Lascelles was obliged to return home, and Protheroe also; but Sophia remained while her father's weakness required her presence. But we must attend to the hero of our story.

The reader has heard that the domestic economy of the Brow was changed, and the number of in-door servants increased; and that it arose from the circumstance of the unkind reports respecting them. There were many families in the village who envied Michael, and Jem Brown, who retained his old affection for him, and his especial anxiety that, as a religious character, all should go well beneath his roof, never failed to bring every report that could at all touch Michael's reputation. Now, though many of the servants at the Rectory were very worthy, and most of them religious characters, yet there was one gossiping girl whom Mrs. Lascelles had taken from Farmer Jennings as dairy-maid: she had been occasionally elevated to the post of waiting-maid to the Miss Jennings, and had inherited some of their cast-off finery, and much of their spirit; and having gathered from the tattle of her young ladies that Mr. Kemp was a sort of Methodist, and knowing that Jem was his

friend, at the same time finding all her smartness lost on the young gardener, she turned her partiality into dislike, and lost no opportunity of teazing him. She would frequently say, " for her part she had not tasted a good bit of vegetables since she left Sizors, and she did believe that the best of the things went up to the Brow."

Jem had borne a good deal from her in a very Christian spirit; but when she said this, he only waited till the old gardener came in to take it up seriously. "Andrews," said Jem, " here's sad goings on between you and I; Sukey's upright mind cannot bear it." The old man sat smoking his pipe in the corner, and as he stopped it, he looked up at Jem with an enquiring eye, "And well, what now?" The dairy-maid was working, and cook sat by; and Robinson, Jem's first friend, was pacing up and down, talking of foreign parts that he had seen with his master. " What now?" *Jem.* " Why, nothing more nor less than this, that I carry the best vegetables out of the garden up to my friends at the Brow Farm." " Pooh," said the old man, " never mind that. An honest conscience, boy, will carry us through more than that." Sukey sat swelling and colouring, and working amazingly quick; and Robinson turning round short, taking

the snuffers in his hand, snuffed the candle, at which the women sat working. "If," said he, and he looked steadily at Sukey, "if the conscience of the accused party may carry them safely through, what is to become of the accuser. I cannot think that such charges ought to be passed over silently; it is not safe to live among those who bring false accusations; I may be charged with wearing my master's clothes; cook with giving away victuals without leave; no man is safe where there are false accusers." All this time Sukey kept reddening, till at last her passion became too much for her, and she said, "she hoped people might be allowed to speak of what they see'd with their own eyes." At this poor old Andrews could sit no longer, but putting his hand upon the shoulder of the accusing party, said, "Whatever you have seen, Susan, I charge you speak." After some conflict with her pride in doing even mischief when she was desired to do it, she said, "Why, hav'nt I seen the frail baskets as belongs to master fetched by that William from the Brow full of things? and hav'nt I seen you, James Brown, many's the time with the flowers and the fruit going yourself?" "Never," said James, "but by my master's order." "And what does

that little carter's boy do here, two or three times every week hanging about the garden door? Do you think, as I can't see?" "First," said Andrews, "for William with the frail baskets, your master is very fond of lettuce." "He don't see much of it," said the pert dairy-maid. Andrews went on. "Your master is very fond of lettuce, I say, and the snails have been very busy in our garden this year; they ate out the very heart of almost all we had. Well, master went up to the Brow, and there he saw some very fine ones growing on the open ground before any of our neighbours had them. Mr. Kemp was quite glad that he had any thing that could be of any use to master, and he begged Jem to come whenever he liked to have them: and ever since that time in our master's own basket, Sukey;" and he looked at her very archly; "we have been fetching away Mr. Kemp's lettuces; and if we did not fetch them, Mr. Kemp's own man was sure to come very kindly down to bring them; and then, as for the little carter's boy, he has brought us manure for the hot-bed whenever we wanted it. So you see your master is greatly injured by Mr. Kemp, Jem Brown, and old Andrews; and if you injure him as much in the dairy as we do in the gar-

den, I know not what will become of him." And here Andrews lit a fresh pipe, and began to smoke; but Sukey was not to be silenced so easily. She said, "It was well known, that with all their religion, Mr. Kemp's servants were oftener at the public than any; and as for Sunday, why they did not mind it a bit, and that the best of them were always going of errands with dinnerings and supperings to Mr. Kemp's new relations. For her part, she had it from the best authority from them as was sent with them, as was'nt mighty fond of going neither, them as thought they had enough to do all the week, and might have a bit of rest on the Sunday."

Now, though these charges were very difficult to make out, and really led to nothing seriously wrong, it had this effect upon Michael's and upon Esther's mind, "we will take our servants into the house, watch over their conduct, and endeavour to make friends of them." This small link in the chain of Providence led to very important results at the Brow: they altered the whole plan of their establishment, and had only four out-door servants besides stone pickers; and as the reader may take some interest in the internal management of such very old friends, we will describe their plans

for the good of their family. They had sufficient employment for one dairy-maid, and as her business required her to rise very early, she was permitted to go to rest as soon as she wished. This dairy-maid was Rose Meredith, who was just going out in that capacity when the changes took place at the Brow; and Betty Smith, who had an interest in all that passed at the Brow, undertook to initiate this young dairy-maid in all the mysteries of cheese-making; and Rose, who was exceedingly pleased with her new situation, promised fair to become all that Stephen wished her. But as we think it may be useful to repeat the advice she received from her brother on her entrance here, we shall give it a place.

"My dear Rose, I have been Mr. Kemp's servant myself, and I know what a kind master he is; and as for your mistress, so great is her gentleness, that I only fear she will be too kind to you. Now, Rose, I have seen something of servants and masters, and I am sorry to say, that I have generally found that the sharpest masters are best served, and gentleness too often abused. But, Rose, do not disgrace me, and make me unhappy; you know what a friend Mr. Kemp has been to me; you know how it

would grieve your sister Fanny, if you were to do any thing wrong. I am not afraid of your being dishonest, my dear Rose, or of your making away with your master's property; but what I fear for you is, that you might give a sharp answer to Mrs. Smith."

Now, says the reader, who is Mrs. Smith?—Since the marriage of Michael, and the changes in the domestic establishment, it was thought right both by Esther and Michael to have this mark of respect shown, and a difference put between her and the other servants. But to return. "Remember, my dear," said Stephen, "that we have all our path of duty in this world; and even if one person goes out of that path, and consequently is unkind to me, or makes me uncomfortable, it does not follow that I am to be unkind to them, and make them uncomfortable. What says the Bible: 'Render to all their dues; recompense to no man evil for evil.' Now all this, my dear sister, is the advice which Mr. Kemp gave me when I lived at the Valley; I had some very cross fellow-servants, and he was continually warning me to have patience with them, and never to trouble my mistress with any complaints; and my having patience with them, made them have patience with me, and at last I got such a habit of speaking

kindly, that I had no difficulty in it, and before I left the Valley, I may say there was nothing but peace in it."

Rose promised every thing, and behaved so very well to Betty Smith, that we may say this good creature had a daughter in Rose Meredith; and for her mistress, it was more the name than any thing else, for she was so aware of Betty's excellence and good management, that she was continually seeking her advice. There was one stranger in the female establishment, this was Ann Medway. Now Nanny, as she was called, came out of Devonshire: she was a cleanly creature and very upright, had a great horror of Methodists, as she called them, and sincerely believed, that if any one spoke religiously on a week day, that it was all hypocrisy, and had she had any money in them, would have looked sharp to her pockets. Now this girl's place was more about the parlour, and she saw more of her mistress than Rose, and all she witnessed was so kind, so gentle and benevolent, that she must have had a heart of stone not to have regarded her with affection. But we must mention the astonishment which she felt, and expressed on the first evening of her arrival at the Brow, when she saw the servants all collected in the hall, and walking

towards the great parlour at the sound of the evening prayer bell. " What are they going to do?" said she to Rose; " what is it all about?" " We are going to prayers," said Rose. " To prayer! what, is your master a Methodist preacher?" " Dear me, no," said Rose, " but master has prayers every night and every morning." Nanny thought to herself, " this will never do for me; I hate such over godly doings, I never saw any good come of it." This she muttered to herself while they were seating. It was Michael's custom, when there were any new comers, to explain in some degree his views and plans for their benefit; and he had one kind expression, that was likely to soften every heart: " I consider that I have another child added to my care, another soul to answer for. Our duties are the same, I to take care of your interest, you to take care of mine; but unless our good God is pleased to help us in both, we shall sadly fail; we do not want directions. This revealed will of God points the duties both of masters and servants, and by it we shall be judged at that day when we must all give account for the deeds done in the body. Now, observe me, I do not mean to say that we shall be saved for being good masters or good ser-

vants, but our Lord teaches us, that 'a tree is known by *its fruits*,' and that 'men do not gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles,' but that 'we are known by *our fruits*,' and that 'if we love him, we shall keep his commandments.'"

Long did this pharasaical girl resist instruction, long did she throw out hints about "people preaching as had'nt been to the Varsity;" frequently would she say, "if her poor father could have lived to have seen her in a Methodist's house, it would have broke his heart: he hated them worse than poison." "I think," said Rose, "you had better go; I am sure, if master knew what you said, I do not think he would keep you." "Oh, as for that, I shall stay my time, and bear it as long as I can: I am sure I have much ado to keep my countenance of a morning, there you all sit of a row gaping, with your noses up in the air like little pigs in a high wind, just as if you were afraid to lose a word on't." Rose had a high spirit, and was exceedingly fond of her master; and replied, "I am afraid to lose a word of it, for it is all good and all meant so kindly to us; the least we can do is to listen to it." "Well, you're very welcome if you like it," said the impenetrable Nanny, "for my part, I had rather be about my work

any day; I am no hypocrite." "That is not so clear," said Rose, "that must be proved; it is not because you say so, that I am bound to believe it."

Here words rose so high that Betty Smith overheard, and came in to know what was the matter. Rose was not a girl to stir up mischief, far from it, therefore she only replied, that she and Nanny could not quite agree; and Betty, who loved peace at her heart, left them to make it out. "I have one thing to desire of you, Nanny," said Rose, "that as long as we live together, you never talk to me about your master and mistress, for I shan't stay to hear it." "I am sure you can't say as ever I said a word against Mrs., I likes her uncommon; and bepities her too."— "Bepity! what do you bepity her for?" "What for? because she never has a bit of pleasure, week in and week out." "I believe, if you were to ask Mrs., she would say she had nothing but pleasure all day long; I came here before you, and I never seed Mrs. but what she was always contented." "Ah! I dare say;" and away she went.

That every thing might go on in regular train, Friday was the day fixed on by Esther for washing up every thing dirty, and by these means the domestic economy suf-

fered no break. Saturday morning the house-maid sat down with her mistress in the quiet little parlour to repair whatever needed reparation. It was in these moments that Esther ventured to give Nanny a little advice, not that she knew any thing of what had passed between Rose and the house-maid, but she had observed particularly during grace at dinner, an impatience in the girl's manner as though this short invocation were too much for her; she began thus: "You come from Devonshire, Nanny?" "Yes, ma'am." "Very beautiful country." "Oh yes, ma'am;" and here the girl ran out in praises of her county: "she had never seen any thing like it, she didn't expect to see any thing like it again." "It is very natural you should love it; I used to be very fond of Worcestershire, I lived there when I was a child. Tis very strange, Nanny, that as we are so fond of all we knew when we were little children, and that chiefly because we were with kind friends who loved us, and gave us all we wanted; it is very strange that we should not love HIM more who provides all needful for us, even to the present moment." Here Nanny said, "Who is that, ma'am?" There was great good sense about Esther, and there was also great good temper, which is not al-

ways found to go hand in hand. She did not burst out with saying, "Dear me, what, don't you know? I thought every child knew that." But she lifted her heart to God, and prayed that he would give her wisdom to instruct the ignorant. She said, "Who gave you life, Nanny?" Nanny stared, for she found there was something of religion coming in. "Who keeps you in health, my good girl? Who preserved you when you had that dreadful malignant fever?" Here Nanny said, that "they had as good a doctor as any in the county, and he never charged them a farthing." Esther was exceedingly struck with this effort of Nanny's to thank any second cause rather than her God; but she still preserved her temper, and went on. "And who do you think, Nanny, preserved your good friend the doctor from catching this disorder, and so enabling him to attend you?" "Oh, as for that, ma'am, I am sure I don't know: I always see'd him with plenty of vinegar on his pocket handkerchief, and I know he took all possible care."

Esther saw there was perverseness in it, so she said, "You have been sadly neglected, my poor child; I do not think there is a Sunday scholar in this village but knows more than you appear to do. Have

you ever read your Bible?" "No, ma'am, not through, and I could not understand what I did read." "Now, Nanny, the same kind Friend whom you will not acknowledge, or thank, or love, that Friend who formed you, and gave you good parents, while neighbouring children were left dirty and neglected—" "Why, la, ma'am, how could you know that? how could you know that James Dummer's children, who lived close by, were so dirty and ragged, that my mother would never let me play with them?" This came out so suddenly, that Esther could hardly help smiling, and only recovered in time to reply, that she really did not know that circumstance, but she well knew that every good and perfect gift cometh from above; every advantage we enjoy, every blessing we share, all, all is His good gift. "Tell me, Nanny, could you make one blade of corn? Every common vegetable you eat, the very air you draw, might be pestilential but for his goodness. Is it too much to thank him, Nanny? is it too much to love him?" "Oh no, ma'am, but I never thought about it." "That is exactly what our great and good God says, 'My people do not consider.' I have often thought of these words, Nanny, when I have seen the cattle following their feeder, 'the ox know-

eth his owner, and the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.'"

Nanny was struck with this: she had never remembered such a text as this, but still she was not subdued, and she observed "what a power of time it would take if we were always to be thinking about religion." "My poor child," said Esther, "if we really did think of religion as we ought, it would be as natural as the air we breathe; and, oh! the peace that it gives the mind; those who hate it little know the solid enjoyment to have no fear of death, Nanny, to be satisfied that all is for the best, happen what may; and then for the temper, a Christian does not dare to make others unhappy, keeps a guard over his actions, his words, and even his thoughts; and if he falls into sin, (for who is it that liveth and sinneth not,) he is the first to be humbled under it, and can never rest till he has made his peace with those whom he has offended." All this went direct to Nanny's conscience; she knew that she had behaved very ill to Rose, and yet she had carried it off with a very high hand; she had never even thought of making an apology, but looked at her with insufferable pride, and flounced about every time she came near her. She

thought to herself, "If Christians must humble themselves, I am sure I am not one, for 'tis the last thing I should ever think of doing." But she began to hope that all her mistress said was not gospel. Now, though I have said that Nanny was not subdued, yet there was a feeling of respect in her mind for which she could not account: her master and mistress did more for their servants than many squires and their ladies; Nanny knew, by experience, that few farmers thought of nursing their servants when they were ill. "Her poor brother would come home with a dreadful cold and cough by sleeping in his wet clothes; it is true, his master paid his wages up till the time he was taken ill, and said, 'There, lad, there's a shilling for you; you have been an honest boy.' But here, when William was ill, there was master up at his bed-side with messes; and if Mrs. Smith's finger did but ache, there was possets, and no one knows what, and Mrs. up and down after her as if she was a lady of the land. Certain they are uncommon kind people;" and she settled it in her mind that it was a very good place for a servant to fall sick in. But what *but* could Nanny make? Why, she said, it was the dullest harvest home she had ever seen. "Why, they darn't sing a song, except that old ditty,

> ' Were I a shepherd's maid, to keep
> On yonder hills a flock of sheep ;'

or,

> ' Ere around the huge oak that o'rshadows yon hill,
> The fond ivy had learn'd to entwine ;'

or some such moral nonsense; then Mrs. must have a hymn at the end, as if that were proper when people were making merry. No; for her part she thought it was a dull house after all, she should try it a year; she didn't think it was well to be changing so often, and she thought mother would not like it;" so she condescended to determine to bear with their religion and themselves a few months longer, upon the broad principle of her own convenience, not at all uncommon with selfish servants. But be it known to such, if any such should read " Michael, the Married Man," these children of the earth reap of the fruit of their own way; and however a master or a mistress may do them good upon *principle*, they cannot feel the *attachment* that a generous Christian servant inspires.

There was another habit of this house, which did not quite suit Nanny's taste: they all dined together; Betty Smith took the bottom of the table, Esther took the top, and Michael sat on one side by her. They were very attentive and kind, fed

them very well, but still the restraint upon their mirth at meals was not at all agreeable to them. Michael would sometimes good-humouredly relate some innocent anecdotes that he had heard; and Brownrigg, who sometimes joined them at table, and who read the newspapers daily, had always something new to communicate. He was indeed a general favourite, and though he sometimes gave Nanny a quiet lesson when she came of an errand from the Brow, she could forgive it, because there was a drollery mixed with all he said and did. As, for instance: one day when she sat chattering in the kitchen to Peggy, after he had given her a message, he went in, and putting on her pattens, placed his hands comically before him, asking her if she had any more commands, for that he could not stop longer, as his mistress would wonder what he was about. Now though this reproof for her gossipping was felt, and well understood, the droll figure of this tall thin man in pattens so amused her, that no resentment was felt. If Peggy staid anywhere where Brownrigg sent her, he would go to the place, and tyeing his handkerchief round her wrist without uttering a single word, lead her quietly home. This happened once after she came into the country, and the nearness into which the

handkerchief brought Peggy to her master, caused a report that he was going to marry that young girl, as they appeared to be walking arm in arm; and the Miss Jennings were not displeased to have this little tale to amuse them, for indeed they were not always confined to such clear probabilities. But Peggy loved her master with very different feelings—the feeling of a child to a parent; and however disagreeable the situation in which he placed her, if she happened to do any thing he did not like, the anger was momentary, and the feeling of love and respect unshaken.

Peggy was an orphan, and was about to be sent to the workhouse, when one Monday evening she was brought up to the committee, before she was introduced; Brownrigg was one of the gentlemen who sat at the table, and the little creature, attracted by we know not what, but certainly it was providentially ordered, for Peggy laid her soft hand upon Brownrigg's as she hung by a poor neighbour's apron. The appeal thrilled through his veins till it reached the heart; and the light brown curls which shaded her open brow, and the fine dark tint of her infant eye, we must own had something to do with it; for Brownrigg was an admirer of beauty, and the pale hue that was stealing over her

features from poverty and neglect, all determined him. So he said, "No, gentlemen, we will not enter her;" and, taking the pen, he wrote a direction to Mrs. Tucker, and desired the woman to leave the child there. Now, though this neighbour was poor, she had a feeling for the infant; she had stood by the death-bed of its father and of its mother, and she said, "She hoped she might be allowed to come and see her sometimes; for," says she, "Sir, if I had had a bit of bread to give it, I would not have brought it here; but I have got three hungry babies of my own, and no hands but these to work for them." Brownrigg assured her, call when she might, she should always see her. So Margaret Fergerson was placed in the care of Mrs. Tucker till she was old enough for household work, and then her kind protector received her; and we can say, that no father ever watched over a darling child with more jealous care than Brownrigg over Peggy. And she well repaid him, for never did she resist his will in any way, but always bore in mind what Mrs. Tucker had impressed upon her, that he had rescued her from mixing with all the common persons who are admitted to a parish workhouse, that he supplied every needful want, and never said, "Peggy, you are

obliged to me," but carefully noted whatever she did that was pleasing; and his praise was combined in four words, "That's my good Peggy," words which distilled and dropped upon her young heart, and were a sufficient reward for any exertion; and he was very particular about whom she associated with. If he saw her getting intimate with any one whom he did not quite approve, he would say, "Tell me your company, and I will tell you who you are;" and this was one reason why he always shortened Nanny's visits. If Rose came, he would good-naturedly tell her he was glad to see her — she was rightly named—and sometimes beg she would always wear the red rose. In short, he had always some merry little speech for *her;* and one day went so far as to walk to the Brow to invite her, with the leave of her good master and mistress, and left some of his best tea for her, and went out himself, that the girls might enjoy themselves. He often glanced at a hope, that one day his sisters would come and dwell with him, but he fixed no time; and as these good women had lived so long and so comfortably together, though they determined never to resist his will, they were equally resolved not to hasten a removal. So month after month stole on, and no

change took place in their domestic plans, and he was so amused with wandering from one house to another, that he began to be as happy in his country as he had been in his town residence.

It is not our intention to weary the reader with all the minutiæ of every-day life—we will merely touch a few points in their present state, and then pass over a few years, and view these young voyagers at a more advanced period.

One of Michael's plans for the happiness of his young family, as dictated by good sense and good nature, we will just glance at. He was quite firm in his resolves against pleasuring on a Sunday, as it was called, and he never allowed them even to go home on *that* day, unless *illness* or a visit from some *distant* friend seemed to render it indispensable; but then he took great care to employ them profitably: those who could read well taught at the adult school, beginners went to the infant school, and there was a secret understanding between Michael and the heads of those establishments; so that he was sure to be informed if there was any gossipping or trifling on the part of his family. Ann Medway was soon discovered to be an errant gossip, and of very little use at the Sunday school, so that from that time

Esther took her with her to visit the sick, while the others were at the schools. She was not informed of the reason, the thing was done, she knew not why; what was at first unpleasant gradually interested her, to look on an old man whom they had assisted to read the Bible, &c.; an infant, whose dimple countenance was lit up with smiles, while it repeated its Sunday hymn. These legitimate sources of pleasure left a harmless glow upon the mind, and they began to wonder how they could be so happy under restraints which had at first been so unpleasing to them; and we must say, that Nanny was really happy to carry a slice of meat to a sick man whom she had attended, and who was sufficiently recovered to partake of it.

As these laws of confinement to the Brow on a Sunday were unchangeable, Michael gave them Tuesday in case they had occasion to go out. I do not mean to say that they went out every Tuesday, but this was the day on which they were allowed to see their friends. At first it occasioned great resistance; but when it was found to be a fixed principle they became reconciled, and even liked it better, such attention was paid to their comfort in every way, they were so well and plentifully fed; Michael helped them with such kindness at

table, every thing provided was so clean and good, and such care taken that there should be no waste, that it may be truly said they lived in the spirit of that text, "Whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, let us do all to the glory of God."

It pleased Providence to bless Michael, in the first four years of his marriage, with three infants: there was no want of kind nurses, no children had so many grandmothers; for besides Mary Humphries and Mary Kemp, there was Mrs. Beal, and Betty Smith pressing the young strangers to their bosoms. But Michael was called to resign, as well as to enjoy; for just as his eldest boy began to lisp his father's and mother's name, he was carried off by a sudden attack supposed to arise from the teeth. This boy, whose name was James, in honour of his late master, was laid in the ground with many tears; but we may truly say they were not rebellious tears, for a spirit of resignation pervaded the mind of each parent, though all the infantine endearments returned upon them with increased force, when they strove most to say, "Thy will be done."

Poor Brownrigg alone would have it that the child was a delicate child, and in too sharp an air, and if he might have had it in his own little cottage, well sheltered

by the surrounding hills, it might have been alive and prattling at his knees; and Margaret was perpetually saying, "My dear, do not say this to Esther, it is her only comfort to think that every thing has been done that could be done. Alas! my dear," said the good old woman, "we must all go at some time, and who can tell but that God took him in great mercy." "No doubt," was her brother's reply; "but yet I should like to have done what could have been done. I have no right to put my fingers in the fire to try if they will burn." The second child was a girl, and was named Jemima at the particular desire of Mrs. Finch, who stood for it with her daughter; and as she thought, from the principles of the parents, they would never buy it any thing very handsome, she insisted on always buying it pelisses and bonnets, which were accepted gratefully, only with this promise, that it should not be too costly.

"Pray, madam, remember," said Michael, "when you are bestowing your gifts on this dear child, you are clothing the infant of your brother's stable-boy?" "I will do all as you would like to have it done," was the reply, "but I remember that I am clothing the child of one of the best men I know, Mr. Kemp, one who has

paid me for many years voluntarily a sum which he had no right to pay; be you the guide of my son, and all I can do for your child is too little." "Dear kind friend, madam, you have always been to me, and I am sure your son will not need any one to guide him, for his own principles appear correct and excellent." "Ah!" said Mrs. Finch, smiling, "you and Jemima have managed him your own way; but no matter, he is a good boy, only rather strict, and hardly thinks his mother can go to heaven." "Ah, dear madam, there is but one way for us all." "Well, well," said Mrs. Finch, "I hope we shall all meet at last, Mr. Kemp, but no matter which road we take, you know." This was spoken rather too quickly, and it went to Michael's heart; and he replied with much solemnity, "There is no other name under heaven whereby we may be saved, but the name of Jesus Christ." This closed the converse for that season.

Now, in the guidance of these two infants, Jemima and Moss, for that was the name of the youngest boy, Michael was determined to begin from the beginning, and though he was surrounded by many who respected his principles, andjoined with him,yet they thought that he was beginning too soon. What could such young infants know?

But this Christian father was immoveable —his children *should* be trained in the way they should go, that was his part—that he would perform—he left the rest with him whose promise never fails. Any thing like petulance was met with a very grave countenance, and if a sturdy resolution to have its own way appeared, it was seated safely and quietly, but never yielded to. Those who at first thought "he is a young father, we shall soon see; these fine new ways can't come to much;" even these were convinced, and ended with saying, "I could not have thought a child could have so much sense, they be uncommon children, just like the father and mother." And one day, when this was said in Mrs. Kemp, his mother's hearing, she said, "Not a bit like our Michael; for when he was a child, there never was a more obstinate untoward boy." Michael laughed. "Do you remember about your little kite when you was only four years old?" "Yes indeed, mother, I do." "What was that?" said Esther, laughing. "Why," replied his mother, "he had a little kite made for him by his father, in imitation of one which pleased him very much: it had a fine red star upon it, and Michael wanted to have a red star, but his father had given him a blue star, and endeavoured to persuade

him it would do quite as well. But it was 'No, no, that would not do;' so he went to bed very much out of temper because of the red star; and in the morning, when it was just light, the sturdy little rebel was seated on the ground with his little knife in his hand, pulling off the blue star." From that time it was a constant joke with Esther: when the children were obstinate, she would whisper, "My love, remember the blue star." And Michael would reply, "Yes, I know what stuff they come of, we shall have blue stars and green stars too, if we don't take care." Nevertheless, this dear young couple drew together very happily, and when this good young woman ever differed in opinion from her husband, she never forgot that the husband was the head of the house, even as Christ is the head of the church.

However people may laugh at the strictness of the Bible Christians, only let them enter the house of one under these principles; let them dwell there for a short season, and they shall see these sweet principles flowing like a river, and giving birth to all that is pure and excellent; they shall feel the calm of such a house, and own that none but He who made the heart could thus frame laws to regulate every action, and give peace to every

bosom. Yes, reader, I am persuaded, that were the word of God the standard of any one's actions, earth would be converted to heaven; with only this exception, that *here* this mortal must bow, *there* shall be no more change. Dear Fanny and Stephen, who had often laughed at Michael's bachelor's management, were convinced that he was right, and took many a silent lesson for the training of their own infants, as they watched the silent progress of this wise father's plans; but Fanny, we must own it, though now a mother of four, had still something of playful gaiety left, and she could not help giving the dear children some indulgences when they came to her house, which were denied at the Brow, such as sitting up to the tea-table, and putting the spoon into the brown sugar basin, and so sweetening the sweet in all the wild revel of infantine excess.

It chanced one day, that Michael came in the midst of one of these visits; the sop was made in the saucer, and the sugar was spread at the top, and the little fat hand was going again; the father stood quietly by for a minute, then putting his arm over Jemima's shoulder, he took up the little mess, and having tasted it, put his babe on his arm, and said, "My little

Jem, (which was the abreviation given this infant,) do you mean to eat all that mess? if you do, when you go home your father must give you one cup of camomile tea." Poor Jemima had often tasted this beverage, which was a favourite remedy of her father's, and which he always administered himself; because, kind as the mother was, she could not give medicine —they were sure to conquer some way, and put by the nauseous draught. Little Jem allowed her mess to be lowered in sweetness, and very happily finished her tea on the knee of her father—as happily as though she had been suffered to satisfy her little palate to the utmost. But it was not all over, for Michael took his naughty Fanny aside, saying, " It is not kind of you, my dear, my precious Fanny, to make the necessary restraints of home disagreeable to these children."

Fanny had never viewed it in that light, but had considered every gratification she could bestow on these young things as proof of her love to their parents; but she was a persuadeable creature, and had such a veneration for Michael, that when she saw he was really in earnest, she never contended; but uncle Brownrigg was not so manageable, he would please the pretty brats, as he called them in his own

way; so the drawers of his desk were opened and pulled about, and not unfrequently the contents scattered on the floor. This habit was so very bad, that Esther was obliged to remonstrate, and the little girl found a new amusement, less mischievous, in brushing uncle Brownrigg's hat, which she did till there was scarcely a morsel of beaver on one part; this taught a lesson, and before these young culprits came, there was generally some ingenious contrivance to amuse them without destroying any of the property of uncle Brownrigg. It may be truly said, that the difficulty of training these young people arose from the indulgence of relatives, who would have done any thing to serve and profit them.

One afternoon, when they were all at tea together, (the father and mother, and the two infants,) at uncle Brownrigg's pretty cottage, the good man, well knowing that he must not give them the customary indulgences, began with a whistle. "Dear me, I wonder where the key of my desk is; why, my little Jem, I have lost the key of my desk," and he winked at Esther as though he would have said, "that's only a deception." But Esther shook her head, for she perfectly understood him, and taking Jemima on her lap,

said, " My love, uncle Brownrigg would do any thing to make you happy, but he cannot have his house littered; you know my little girl never litters at home—no, she folds up her mother's work and her little brother's pinafore; she likes to be my little maid." " Yes, mother, yes, I do;" and as soon as the children were gone from the room, Brownrigg said, " Now you will not persuade me that that child *likes* to put away." Esther knew by her uncle's manner, that he was not pleased, and it went to her heart to displease him in any way; so she only said, " My dear Sir, I *endeavour* to make her like it." " Well, well, that's all very right, only there is no use in saying the child *likes* it."

Brownrigg, who always enjoyed a fling at the *very good* people, as he called them, continued. " That's not quite true, you know, to say she *likes* it." Michael, who had not ventured to speak hitherto, now said, " When I lived at P., Sir, it was Mr. Walker's habit to preach once a quarter to parents and children, and he took suitable texts, ' Train up a child in the way it should go;' ' Children, obey your parents;' and one observation which he made I have never forgotten, on ' train up a child in the way he should go.' It was ' Now

this relates not only to religious training, but the manner in which you bring up your children in your families, teach them to obey at the first word, train them in the habits of frugality and neatness, in habits of usefulness, train them in the habits of kindness to each other, and in active attention to all among whom they dwell. Now, though this teaching may be forgotten or rebelled against for a season, a good habit *cannot* be lost. *Cannot*, you will say; I reply, *cannot*. Hath not God promised us, that 'when he is old, he shall not depart from it.' I am so completely convinced of the blessing on good training, that I really do not believe a child morally and religiously trained, (observe what I say) with care, with great care, I do not believe that such a child can turn out ill; but then, you must not only bring them up at home, but keep them at home. Do not, after you have given a child an important lesson, turn it out into the street to play with those whose parents care not whether they go to heaven or hell. Shun bad company for your child, as carefully as for yourself; and one word more: I would say, do not indulge their appetites, never reward them by unusual indulgence, do not make them fancy there is happiness in excess, and when you give

them instruction, do not look very grave, as though all that is excellent were dull and disagreeable; no, let them feel what is most strictly true, 'that the man that feareth the Lord is blessed;' 'that the ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace.' But on the contrary, if (as it will surely happen) they commit *sin*, then let the gravity of your countenance evince your concern, especially for a lie; watch the slightest variation from truth, and never pass it by. The Scriptures abound in such awful denunciations against lying, that indeed it seems impossible for a good parent to excuse it. I am convinced there are many deviations from truth unnoticed. But oh, my friends, guard this avenue to all that is dreadful. Remember, mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other, and that with him who cannot lie, no liar can dwell.'"

Brownrigg had fidgetted for some time, and at last said, "Well, this is all very good and very excellent, and you have a fine long memory, Sir." Then drawing himself up, "as for truth, no man is more particular than I am, as our Peggy, whom I have brought up from a child, has never dared to tell me any thing that varied from the truth, she would have lost her place imme-

diately." Esther knew it would not do to remind her uncle of the prevarication he himself had used; he would have called it cant, straining at gnats, and swallowing camels, &c. So the subject dropped, and Brownrigg stood like a conqueror on the field of battle; and the children coming in loaded with flowers and fruits, gave a turn to the conversation, though not to thought.

There was in Brownrigg's mind a solidity and turn for reflection, which, had he been an educated man, would not have left him satisfied with mediocrity. Though his opportunities for improvement had been few, he had improved them, and was what the world would call a clever sensible man. Now, though he was as much on his guard against methodism, as he called it, as a citizen is against a pickpocket, yet he never closed his ears to what he thought a good thing; and though some of Mr. Michael's quotations from his friend Mr. Walker were such as he thought every one else would make, still that part of his discourse against indulgences and bad company was pretty good—indeed it was very good, he should think of it; and, as he was tying his neckcloth before the glass next morning, and drawing the long ends through till each matched the other to a hair's breadth, "No, no," said he, "Jo-

nathan Brownrigg is not a man to resist a good argument; if you wish a child not to be a glutton when he is a man, you ought not to cram him when he is a child. That really was a sensible thought of that Mr. Walker's, he was a person I always liked; 'tis a pity he is a——," and he began whistling; and in the next minute, "Peggy, child, where's my breakfast?" and the nice little girl came in with the tea-things.

The rising families at the mill and the Brow very soon gave evidence of the benefits of orderly training; and the young Michael, who had often had his eye directed to his prayer-book by uncle Michael, began to play the tutor to little Jem, and look comically grave at her as she was playing with the spangles on a little fan which godmamma had given her, shaking his little curled head most sagely at her want of attention, on this her third visit to the house of prayer. It was indeed so very droll, that even uncle Michael himself was obliged to take out his handkerchief and turn his eyes another way, to avoid the contagion of a smile from Fanny; and as the little mentor led his young cousin from church, they heard him say, "Jemmy dear, you should never play with things at church." The little arch rebel looked at him with saucy indifference, as though she would have

said, " Who made thee a ruler and a judge;" and the young Michael, like many other mentors, felt his consequence some way taken down, he could not tell how.

Rose had been very anxious for her mistress's interest, making as much butter as she possibly could, and very sharp with the key of her dairy, and which is very common in such cases, where people are too anxious to be rich, some suspicion rose in Esther's mind lest the weight of the butter should be insufficient—it never had been yet; but on this morning, as she walked through her orderly dairy, and saw her beautiful pounds of butter lay side by side, at eighteen pence each pound, her heart misgave, and she said, " This would indeed be an injury to God's cause, if the Brow farm butter should want in weight;" and when she weighed it, which she did most carefully, though it could not be said to want weight, it went so very close, that Esther reduced the three-and twenty pounds to one-and-twenty, having it all made up again to Rose's discontent, though she uttered not a single word; but after Esther went out of the dairy, Ann Medway, in passing, heard Rose say, " My mistress is a deal too particular." This was quite enough, she treasured it in her

mind, and it was laid by for some convenient opportunity.

But this care of Esther's to maintain a good conscience towards God and towards man was acknowledged even by enemies; no one ever thought of weighing their butter but were sure to walk up, as soon as the servant appeared in the market. People were even waiting for it—both quality and quantity recommended it. The same if Michael had a horse to sell, he would be telling the defects before the person who was buying it inquired; but this brought its own blessing in confidence of character, and our hero seemed in some danger of that woe which is denounced against those of whom all men speak well. In his own bosom he had many conflicts, a deepened sense of his own depravity, and much of the internal conflict with which a sincere Christian is often harassed; and this had been strengthened by a visit to his old and reverend pastor; that he should be struggling who had been a guide and a light to others; that he should tremble, who had been feet to the lame. Oh, we have a subtle enemy, who will make even our humility a snare; but as it is frequently found under the attendance on a faithful ministry, that there is deliverance for the captive soul, so it was here. Mi-

chael had not even confided his discouragement to his bosom friend; he knew she would suffer, and he feared the contagion of doubt. In his uneasy state he would not even speak to Mr. Lascelles, but he was most fervent in prayer, and a sermon of this good man from these words was at this time a great consolation. "Deliver him from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom."

Mr. Lascelles dwelt so much upon the security of this ransom, the certainty that it was paid, the sufficiency of the sum, the complete satisfaction of the creditor, to whom it was due; and all this was not mere assertion, but proved by rich scripture quotation. Thus, for instance: "deliver him from going down into the pit," the desire, on the part of God, that man should be delivered, then in the fulness of time he came who should deliver, "Lo, I come to do thy will." Again: the confirmation that light was in the world, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" then, that the whole is fully completely accomplished, was declared by those words: "It is finished." Lastly, all was clear of him who promised. Yet again, there might be doubt, there might be fear on the part of those who were to receive these blessings, let such depend on these promises,

" Lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world;" " Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

We may truly say, that Michael's trials arose from his prosperity. Mr. Lascelles touched this also; he said, " Many a good man has feared, from the very circumstance of his being too much blessed, too prosperous. He was ready to say, 'what have I to suffer? what are my cares?' This is a proof of peculiar grace, when those whom prosperity make humble, lest they should forget God; for it is the common nature of wealth and success to harden the heart, not soften it—to make it confident, and not fearful. Let such rejoice, that God has not left them to themselves; when they begin to fear, let them begin to hope, and in the multitude of these sorrows, which peculiarly press down their spirits, may the comforts of the Lord refresh their souls."

Every word in this discourse went direct to Michael's bosom; he knew he had never spoken to any human creature, or he should have thought some one had betrayed him, and that his kind friend was thus endeavouring to comfort and support him. But no; he had adopted this idea, that it was a part of his duty here to imitate his

Saviour, and to tread the wine-press alone. "Perhaps," said he to himself, "I might take comfort sooner, if I could speak to some one; but then I should not be so certain that my help came from above. No, I must not confer with flesh and blood; I must look to the hills from whence cometh my help;" and he did so, and the consolation which he received from this sermon was such, that it was long a support to his mind when clouds came over it.

His faithful partner was not insensible or indifferent: she saw that he struggled with something which he did not wish to communicate, but she had too much prudence and native delicacy to endeavour to penetrate what he sought to conceal; so in this instance he kept to his resolution, and laid his burthen only before the Lord. In all other minor matters, where their common interest was concerned, he was completely open, and he has been frequently heard to say, "Thou art indeed a help-meet, my love." Their union was so unbroken, that it interested the whole family when they saw the heads of the house living in the spirit of kindness and love, they could not with any shadow of propriety contend; and indeed, Michael and Esther took good care that they should have very little opportunity, for their day

was so employed that they had no vacuum. He thought there was great truth in that line of Dr. Watts :

> "For Satan finds some mischief still,
> For idle hands to do."

though they were very careful never to overwork them, or to appoint them more than they could perform with neatness and punctuality; and this orderly training was not confined to their own business, but they continued their care over the expenditure of those beneath their roof; persuading their servants to put aside some portion of their earnings in every year, and confide it in the savings bank, that they might have somewhat to bestow on their parents, and thus return those kindnesses received in infancy. Esther insisted upon their clothes being mended with neatness; she never gave them ribbons, lace, or any sort of finery; but if there was any extraordinary care of her children, or herself, some *solid, useful* gift, was sure to be bestowed, and their stores were thus suitably increased, without receiving them by foolish gifts, which only serve to flatter vanity. And Michael, on his part, when the travelling tailor came his yearly round, offering to repair the damages of time, Michael would insist upon having all mended that was torn, and

usually paid the expense himself; and thus kept his family in economical order. Their care of their health was equally marked and judicious, the slightest cold was taken care of; and in the winter, if the younger ones walked at all carefully, as though they had chilblains, he immediately attended to it, prescribing simple remedies in time, so that, commonly speaking, they had a cleanly, healthy, domestic circle. He watched every countenance, and we may truly say, that he lived in the fear of God, and in love to his fellow-creatures.

At first, these peculiarities were wearisome, "Master was a coddle, master was putting his finger into every thing;" but when the men found the maids employed in the long winter evenings knitting their warm socks, and the maids that they were well paid for this labour, to which at first they went very reluctantly; when they found, that as the tailor came, the old clothes of their master, which he commonly wore pretty close, were cut into gaiters, and quilted thickly, laid by with care till the winter set in; when they found that his whole mind was employed in providing for every comfort, and fencing them against every danger, they became satisfied, and even thankful; and at those periods of the

year when different articles of the farm were to be delivered in, his excessive care for those who were to sleep out was unheard of before. He would say to the carter, " If you are going some way, which will not permit your return to night, be sure to rest at the inn, and take care of yourself, and of the little lad that drives. Have a dry sleeping-room, and provide something warm for him and yourself; only avoid excess, my good fellow." Often would the landlord of the different inns at which they put up, be surprised to hear those customers, who formerly were contented with an out-house or a ruinous loft, asking for a dry chamber for him and the boy, and a steak and a little good beer before they went to bed. " And who do you live with, pray?" says one to the little urchin who was warming himself by the fire. " I live with a very good master and mistress," says the boy; " I likes them uncommon, I would go through fire and water to serve them,—would not you, Giles?" And the landlord winking, said, " Well, and how much smutty wheat did you put off for him at the bottom of your sacks?" " Smutty wheat," said the carter. " Smutty wheat," responded the boy, " master always keeps that at home if he has any." " Oh, so you eat that, do you?"

"Not I, because I'm an out-door servant, but master eats it in his own family, then he has it washed and cleaned, and kiln dried; and I heard him say, as it turned out beautiful." "Why, it seems you are very fond of your master?" "Yes I be, I never had a kinder, and never expect to get such another." "Oh! I suppose he lets you have your own way." "Why, not at first, but now I likes his ways so well, that I commonly mind he saves me time, he saves me labour, because he gives us all a right way to do every thing." "Well, this is a famous man, this master of your's; pray, what is his name?" "Kemp." "Farmer Kemp. Oh, oh," said the landlord, "I have heard of him; that's he that wheedled his old master out of all his property, and cheated Moss's sister Farmer Finch's wife that was killed. Hardly could the carter wait the conclusion of this short speech. "*My* master wheedle, *my* master cheat; I'd fight the best man in England who should presume to say it; I have known master ever since he was a boy, and I know all his outgoings and his incomings, and that is more than any body here does, I believe. I have heard them as knows very well, say that master fretted more when he got that money than if he had lost it."

Landlord. "But you won't say as Mrs. Finch was delighted with it, you won't say as Miss Jemima and Mr. James were pleased." "Yes, I will say that; and for why? because I know it. Why, have not Mr. James been living at master's house for these three months? and have not Mrs. Finch and Miss Jemima just left? You know that, don't you, Tommy?" "To be sure I do. And Giles, what do you think I heard Madam Finch say when she got on her horse; and I held 'em, you know?" "I can't tell," said Giles. "Why, master was standing, putting things comfortable as she sat on her horse, gathering up the bridle in her hand. 'God bless you, Mr. Kemp,' says she; 'thank you for your kind care of me and mine. God will bless you, you good young man.'" "Why," says the landlord, "that don't seem as if she was very angry, to be sure; but is not your master a Methodist? Is not he one of the saints? Don't he pretend to be better than his neighbours?" "I don't know what he pretends to," said Giles, "but he certainly is better than his neighbours, I am sure there is no farmer like him in our parish, I thinks he is almost as good as the minister." "Ah, that's what I have heard," said the landlord, "and I have heard that he and the

minister do take it by turns to pray, and that this Mr. Kemp can pray as long as the minister, and longer too sometimes; and I have heard say, as the minister's wife don't like it, she never goes nigh 'em, and that she was a genteel lady, and did not like to put up with such company." Giles felt he was getting more and more angry, and Michael had often said to the men, "Never answer when you are in a passion, lest you should swear; always wait a bit." So he thought within himself he would take his advice; and at last he looked up, and said, "Master Landlord, pray how old are you?" "Why, I think I'm fifty-six next Michaelmas." "And how many lies do you think you have heard in your life?" "Why, that I cannot say, a good many I don't doubt." "So I suppose," said Giles, "and if you keep a list you may put down these along the side of 'em. If you have heard that the minister is very fond of my master, you have heard the truth; and if you have heard that the minister's wife cannot leave the house, you have heard the truth; for why? because she is a delicate lady, and has not got her health: she comes to church in the chaise, and how often my master goes and opens the little door for her I cannot tell; many's the time I have

heard her say, 'Thank you, my kind Mr. Kemp, thank you.' Now, this does not look like enmity and malice, I think." "Why no," said the landlord.

The carter paid his expenses, and when he was just going to drive off from the inn, he said, "Perhaps, Mr. Landlord, you would not object if all the farmers were Methodists, if their servants, instead of taking up their talots and leaving little but dirt behind them, would pay you as we have paid you, and give you as little trouble." "I can't say but what you have behaved very well, and I like to hear a man speak well of his master; I like to be well spoken of myself, and little dogs as will fetch will carry, for they as won't speak well of their own, are not likely to speak well of the stranger; and perhaps, when you are recommending a good inn, dry sleeping chambers, and a very decent cook, not forgetting the old October, it may come to your mind, Mr. Carter, to say a word for the Black Boar." "I have nothing to say against it, Master Landlord, only I shall take care not to send you any Methodists."

It happened that year that Michael was chosen overseer; his whole view of this office he had gathered from men of better judgment and information than himself. The system of the poor laws was a bad

system, and he could not help thinking, that though it was not in his power to change them, he might gradually bring his own people to live independently of the parish. Thus, for instance, he paid them good wages, and encouraged them by little presents now and then—one a pig, another a bushel of malt, and if ever they worked extra they were sure to be better paid than usual. In fine, the whole of Michael's arrangements was gradually working to bring his people back to a state of feeling which leads to honest independence and sympathy for their natural connections.—But perhaps a dialogue between Michael and his shepherd may illustrate my meaning, and shew the principle upon which he acted more clearly.

"Sir," said this man, "my poor father has been sick this fortnight, and the parish doctor says there is no hope of him, if he can't have nourishing broths and other good things." "As for broth," said Michael, "it is not possible to get better than you can have at the soup shops in this village; Mr. Lascelles's cook buys meat, and old Norris's wife is employed in nothing else but making it, and most excellent it is." "Well, I never did taste it," said the shepherd, "I never had any fancy to it; I always had a notion that all the scraps in Mr. Lascelles's kitchen went to

the making of it; and though poor folks be poor folks, yet they are not cats and dogs." "You are in a great error, Mortlake," said Michael; "I believe no scrap but butcher's ever went to that soup shop, and it is a sad prejudice you have all got. I am very certain there is no better soup in this parish, not even at the Rectory. Suppose I send for a basin, or give you a ticket to go and fetch it?" "As you please, Sir." "Well, you shall go then," said Michael. The soup was brought, and the shepherd confessed it was excellent." "Well then, here is soup for your father, and as you have very good wages, Mortlake, I think it will be more for your credit to allow him from your wages so much a week." The shepherd put his hat on one side, and scratching his ear, said, "he did not know as his mistress would consent." Michael, who thought he meant Esther, assured him that "his mistress and he were talking of it together, and that they both agreed it was quite the duty of every one who could afford it do do every thing for their families without help from the parish." "But, Sir, I mean my wife, and I thinks she would object." "Oh, Mortlake, I hope not. Your parents did not go to the parish to bring you up, Mortlake." "I can't say as they did, Sir; my father was a miller, and

picked up a very decent livelihood." "And you may do the same, Mortlake, and still put by a portion for your father." "You don't mean, Sir, as I should keep father, do you?" "Who kept you before you could get your own bread, Mortlake?" "Why, to be sure, father did; but then that is quite different, I can't make father do as I bid him. It arn't to be expected. If my children were naughty, I would put them to bed out of my way; but if father is cross I must bear it. Besides, you see I was just getting the fore horse by the head, and have laid by a little against a rainy day, but if I be to allow father, that will all go." "But when your father's well he maintains himself, Mortlake; and I should think it would make him well sooner, to find that he had a son who cared for him. Now I tell you what, you have been very careful this last spring time, and I do not think I lost above one lamb. Now I tell you what I will do for you: I will give you thirty shillings towards keeping your father, sooner than you should go to the parish." "Why, that is very genteel of you, Sir; why, thirty shillings is as much as father would want." "But, hark ye, what, Mortlake, you are not to allowance this money, and when it is gone, say you can do no more; no, your wife must go

and see him every day, and help your poor old mother to attend him, and whatever the doctor orders you must get for him; and when my thirty shillings is gone, you are not to harden your heart, and say you can do no more." "What, Sir, I harden my heart against father; no, Sir, that could not be, for I am uncommon fond of father." "Have you not a brother, Mortlake?" "To be sure I have, Sir, one as lives at Farmer Jennings's: he is the shepherd there, Sir" "So I thought, well go to him; say nothing of what I am going to give you, but endeavour to persuade him to help your poor father now in the time of his need."

The shepherd did as his master advised. "What," says his brother, "I allow him. Are not the parish bound to allow him?" "Ah!" said Mortlake, "did not father provide for us when we were young? and can't we do something for him now? why Tom, I thought you was fond of your father," said Isaac. "And so I be uncommon fond; but why should I save the parish, arn't they bound? Where didst ye get these notions in your head? I'm thinking as thy master helped ye to it, so over-righteous all at once," and not one penny could he get from his brother.

This tale was told to Mr. Lascelles. "Ah! this comes of our poor laws," said he. Michael was not discouraged, he had heard Mr. Lascelles say, that it was best, in working any change, to begin with the youngest; therefore, in a long family distress which afflicted the parents of his little plough-boy, he took him into his small parlour, and shutting the door, he began as follows:

Patting his head with kindness, he said, "Charles, how old are you?" "Nine, Sir, come mothering Sunday." "Nine, why, you are getting on, Charles; next year you will be ten, should you live to see it." Charles smiled, "Yes, Sir." "I was pleased last Sunday to observe that you were very attentive at church, that you read the Psalms carefully with your brother, so here is a nice prayer-book for you." "I thank you, Sir," said Charles, and his eyes glistened with pleasure. "I think, my lad, your father has all your earnings?" "Yes, Sir, only mother says I am to have a new frock against my birthday; for you see, Sir, this has been mended pretty often." "Well, and where is the money?" Charles looked very knowingly, and said, his mother had given him so much a-week to put into his money box, and that he got quite enough into

sixpence. "But, Charles, when I called upon your father the other day, I thought his coat looked very old." "Yes, Sir." "Now, should you like to have a new frock, and your father wear his old coat, when he has got the rheumatism, and you are quite well?" "If my father wanted a coat, I think I could not be happy to wear a new dress, and see my poor father go ragged. But my frock won't cost above six shillings, and father's coat would cost a power of money." "Well, Charles, I was thinking of asking Mr. Lascelles and Mr. Brownrigg, and Mr. Meredith at the mill, all to help with a little for a coat for your father, and adding something myself; and if you were to put down your six shillings at the top of the paper, I think it would be an encouragement to these gentlemen to put down something. What do you think, Charles?" Charles did not understand him. "Now come here, child," said Michael; "your father's coat will cost thirty shillings: Now, how much is five times six?" "Five times six is thirty, Sir." "Well, there is Mr. Lascelles, I know he will give six shillings; there is Mr. Brownrigg, that makes twelve; there is Mr. Meredith at the mill, and that makes eighteen; then there is my six shillings, and that makes twenty-four. But

what shall we do for the other six, if you won't help your poor father?" "Oh, but I will, Sir, and welcome." "Well, now, that is just what I expected from you, Charles; I did indeed expect you would help us to buy your father a coat." It may be thought that Michael would immediately buy this boy a new frock; but no, he did not; he ordered him to bring his frock up, and had it very nicely mended for him with a new pair of sleeves; but it would have quite been destroying the sacrifice, had he immediately supplied the lad's exigence, and we can safely say that this kindled spirit in the mind of the boy for his poor father continued long to operate. A voluntary sacrifice which he made the following year may serve to prove this.

He saw his mother hard at work one Saturday night piecing her gown, and he said to himself, "How I do wish I could buy mother a new gown; and when he saw his sister, as he did shortly after at the mop, "Phillis," said he, "might not Walter, and you and I, put a little together to buy mother a gown? why, I was thinking there was every body in the parish gets a new gown but our mother;" and Phillis and he went up to her one Monday morning, and put their arms round her neck, and begged her to accept of the gown which they had

bought her; and said, "Now do ye get it made against next Sunday, for we shall be proud to see you wear it." The mother's tears flowed plentifully; she kissed her children again and again; said, God would bless them for their duty, and she should never forget it; it would be the pleasantest gown that ever she wore; and we believe there are few mothers but would feel this, and there is nothing so hard to bear as coldness and neglect from the child you have cherished, so much does tenderness and affection warm the parental bosom. "Ah!" said the mother to herself, "this is all that good Mr. Kemp's doing; never was a more dutiful boy than that Charles has been to me. How true it is, that a good master maketh a good servant; they may call him a Methodist if they will, but I am sure his methods are good methods; I have reason to respect him, however." It is commonly found that persons who are very much prejudiced against religion lose those prejudices, where their interest is concerned. Thus it was with the mother of our little plough-boy; and as he frequently stayed to family worship with Michael, so he had frequently carried home any thing which particularly struck him: and the mother's mind became desirous of instruction, and

her gossipping visits amongst her foolish neighbours were less frequent. The first steps of improvement are often imperceptible; the stream of grace is fine as a silver thread, till it becomes broad as a river, watering and fertilizing as it flows. Many were the opportunities which the extending influence of this good young man gave him of promoting that cause which lay nearest his heart; if he sold his sheep, and the person who bought them thought them not so good as he expected, and complained that they were dear, Michael was ready to return any portion of the money that might be reasonably expected: and when a neighbouring farmer said to him, "Why, Mr. Kemp, a bargain is a bargain," Michael would reply, "True, Sir, but my conscience will not let me make a hard bargain." The result of all this care for the honour of religion was, that though they were still prejudiced, they were convinced that Mr. Kemp's religion was kind-hearted and liberal.

There was something in the natural character of Mr. Lascelles, noble, dignified, and liberal; and when such a character expands with all the tenderness of christian sympathy, it becomes a lovely object for contemplation. It might be said of him, that God had given him a large heart,

and when he was bringing out of his treasures things new and old, he was frequently found dwelling on liberality as one of the most prominent features of Christianity; and Michael found his heart warmed by his friend, cheered and renovated as he was by continual influence of the Scripture on his heart. He was in a state of preparation for the instructions of his minister, and did indeed receive the Word in childlike simplicity, that he might grow thereby. He was never found fancying himself capable of the ministerial character; he thought he might be a good farmer, a good master, a kind parent, and a tender husband, but for the work of the ministry he had sense enough to perceive he was incompetent. A life devoted to that cause without any other employment, he observed to be quite sufficient. There was scarcely a day throughout the year in which his pastor was not called, either to visit the sick or to support the dying, to counsel and instruct the ignorant, and constantly perform those offices and render that assistance which poverty requires. Again, the close study, the deep thought, the frequent tracing of God's providential care in pages of profane and sacred history, with incidental observations which his own experience furnished. Michael had the good sense to per-

ceive that for this he was incapable; and when invited to join some well meaning but injudicious person in a neighbouring village, in a meeting for prayer and expounding the Scriptures, he was satisfied with repeating in the week to his family that which he learnt from his pastor on the Sunday; and if any thing struck him in a new light as he read the Scriptures, he would consult Esther in private, and this often furnished very sweet and profitable subjects for intercourse.

There was one man, a butcher, whose life was certainly much changed by the power of religion: he was of an ardent temper, easily kindled into violent emotion, and having been persuaded to accompany a neighbour to one of these religious meetings, his imagination became fired, and he thought he too could preach; so that, whenever there was a disappointment in the regular preacher, this butcher was sent for to supply. And one day, as he was bargaining with Michael for a cow, sharpening his knife upon the steel as it hung before him mechanically, he said, "Now, Mr. Kemp, we are sorry not to see you yonder; we had a fine meeting on Friday, and I understand we are to have a powerful preacher down next Sunday." Michael looked a little ironical, when he

asked him of what trade the minister was that was expected, whether a barber or a shoemaker, saying, he really believed, if a person of any trade might be excused for turning preacher, it was these two, whose vacancy of mind, while their fingers were employed, it might naturally be supposed, would sometimes mislead their judgment. "But as for me, neighbour, I have so much to do, that I have no excuse for forgetting myself; and I really find that I have so much to learn, that I never attempt to teach except my own family, and to them I commonly repeat what the good pastor teaches me on the Sunday." The butcher, who found every word of this convey some reproof to himself, observed, "that he did not see the good of repeating what they had heard, but thought they might as well remember that themselves." Michael was ready to say, "I do not know how you find it, neighbour, but I find my family can bear reminding, they don't get the lessons so very perfect."

In short, Michael was incorrigible; he went once by the advice of his pastor, but that once was enough; he saw so much vanity in the midst of their religious exercises, that he was convinced, for him at least, it would be a scene of danger; "for

even while I stood there," said he, "listening to others, either Satan or my own corrupt heart said, 'Why, I could pray better than this.'" This good young man started at his danger, saying, "Lord, pardon me," in the secret recesses of his own bosom; he sought the quiet walk in his garden, where he had been accustomed to pour out his soul before God, entreating that gracious protection from the world and from himself which he had so often found.

The little cousins were very intimate, very fond of each other, and the young Michael having been so long his uncle's pet, felt himself quite as much at home at the Brow as at the Mill; and as he was now nearly eight years old, was allowed to wander wherever his fancy led him. Not so the young Jemima, but like other young rebels, she was very fond of forbidden paths, and it required some guard over her truant footsteps to keep her always at home. In order for this, the little Merediths were frequent visitors at the Brow Farm, and many an hour's amusement has Esther found in listening to their conversation. The most favourite topic with little Michael was what happened at his school, and sometimes Esther was obliged to interfere to prevent the repetition of

what she thought her little girl had better not know. There were some boys who came from a neighbouring village, who had told Michael long stories of the wonders of their fair, how ladies danced with the rope, and quack doctors cured people of all disorders only by looking at them; jugglers who told you what you were thinking of. The little girl sat wondering, and at a loss to understand it all, and could only in her own innocent manner say, "O dear, how pretty!" Aunt Esther suffered this till she heard Michael say that he would take her, that she should ride in the roundabout, where there was a boat and a one-horse chaise. At this Esther took her little maid upon her lap, saying, "No, little Jem, I should think cousin Michael would never go to such a place, and if he did, little Jem must stay at home with mother." But Jem's imagination was fired, and many days passed before she could forget the wonders of the fair. This slight incident furnished a lesson to both houses: if they were not to go into the follies of the world, they must not be exposed to the hearing of them.

And the question arose how to avoid this. In a world of sin and sorrow it seemed next to impossible to keep them from the hearing of it, and yet Michael was

firmly resolved that he would train his children in the way they should go. "I will set before them the good and the right way; I know the Lord will do his part, only let me be careful to do mine." The difficulty was, how to gain the necessary education for young Meredith without exposing him, and how to allow the delightful intercourse of affection between the young cousins, and yet preserve them from lingering after a world full of dangers. The bare repetition of way-side converse was full of dangers; the very walk from the Brow to the Mill, and from the Mill to the Brow, furnished something for the animated mind of the young Michael, and his uncle could not but observe how much deeper were the impressions of folly and nonsense on the hearts of these young ones, than any lesson, however pleasant, taught by wisdom and experience. Esther was speaking of this to her mother; her good old aunt, sitting by her, said in her peculiar manner, "Ah, I know it, I see it in my garden." Though Esther was so used to her aunt, she could but look round in astonishment at this little speech, and with an inquiring eye, said "Aunt?" "Why, Esther, child, don't you remember when you and I worked in our garden, raking, hoeing, and sowing our seeds; and don't you

remember, when the feathered seeds came flying round us, how often we have said, that these took root and flourished without any care, while we laboured almost in vain to make our flowers grow. You see, Esther, it is just the same with the children; the weeds and the trumpery do grow and flourish, you see, while the pretty flowers you plant do droop and fade. There is but one, dear, that can make your flowers grow, the Lord of the harvest."

Esther. "True, aunt, and I am sure—" "Yes, I know what you would say, Hetty, you're sure that you and your husband do pray, and have prayed; and what do the Scriptures say? 'Pray without ceasing.' 'Men ought always to pray, and not to faint,' 'Continuing instant in prayer.'" Poor dear Esther made no reply, but said within herself, "Do we not always pray in earnest? It seems as though my aunt thought we depended on ourselves, and I am sure we do not." At this silence of Esther's her aunt looked up, and said, "I know what ye be thinking of, dear, Ye be thinking, as I tell you, what ye do know and practice every day of your lives. But remember, Hetty, we do all want reminding, I am sure I do, that am an old traveller, we must have here a little and there a little, line upon line. Do you remember what St. Paul says, dear, 'Not as though

I had attained or were already perfect, but I follow on :'

> ' Go on to seek to know the Lord,
> And practice what you know.' "

Strange to say, yet true it was, that this young mother was rather teased than profited by all this ; she knew it, she practised it, but as yet the tide of nature in the dear little ones was too strong for her, and the fond parents were precisely in the same state, waiting and wanting some little plan of counteraction to be immediately executed for the benefit of the young ones ; and this short scriptural plan of the dear old Christians seemed to Esther a repetition of admitted truth, and not to their present purpose. But when she got home, when she considered it, she could not but acknowledge to herself, that though some little scheme for present practice might be suggested, its eventual success depended on the very advice she had received. Thus it is with the best; Christians are sometimes desirous of a short cut to their purpose, forgetting that, like the husbandmen, they must wait for the former and latter rain, for the sun to shine, and the dews to descend, ere their plants shall thrive, and their seed ripen for life and glory. But there never was a sincere believer, however weak, who sought the eternal arm, but sooner or later

found the support he sought. Never one who desired light but that promise was fulfilled, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

While they were pausing, and seeking the best method to avoid worldly association for their little ones, an event happened which seemed favourable to their wishes. The war was over, and a lieutenant in the navy with a large family, who had been long known to Mr. Lascelles, wrote to him, to inquire if there was any cottage in his parish to which a poor man might bring a large family; it must be reasonable, because his means were very limited; but it must not be small, because he had many children. Indeed, he had thought of adding to his income by tuition, teaching some branches of mathematics, the first rudiments of Latin; "and as for French," said he, "a long residence in that detestable country, though a great part of it was spent in prison, has made me very competent. If therefore, dear Sir, you could find a resting-place for a tired warrior, you would confer a lasting benefit on me and mine. My family consists chiefly of the wrong sort: the two younger only are boys, one in arms. Now it is not that I doubt of his providing care, but unless I can add something to our li-

mited means, we shall find it a hard matter to live, and my wife is not strong, and really wants some indulgences which I would gladly give her. A line soon will oblige, dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully."

"Now, what shall we do about this, Mentoria? I don't know that we want schoolmasters, do we? Have we not a redoubtable doctor in the next village, and have we not national schools for our other classes." Mrs. Lascelles declared she did not know, but she should be so glad to serve poor Mrs. Ferguson. "No one can doubt, my love, but what you would be glad to serve all whom you know," said Mr. Lascelles, "but we must find a nest for these parent birds, and we must get a class for this tutor; eleven mouths to feed is no trifle, he must not starve them. But we will do nothing in a hurry, love."

It was some weeks after the receipt of this letter before Mr. Lascelles ventured to hope he could be of any use to his friend Ferguson, and even then he acted cautiously and timidly, as one afraid of injuring those whom he wished to serve. But when Michael called upon him to ask his counsel respecting his young ones, and when he stated how anxious he was to

keep his little nephew from the every-day walk to the next village, which exposed him to wayside acquaintance; "Why, this might do indeed," said Mr. Lascelles; "but do you think, my good friend, you could raise enough?" Michael wondered. "Enough, Sir;" "Ah! sufficient numbers of pupils; I forgot I had not consulted you." He then related what was pending in his own mind. "Does not this seem providential, Sir?" said Michael. "Why, my good fellow, at your age I should have said so, but with warm feelings and an immature judgment, sometimes too much in a hurry to wait for clear guidance, I have made some mistakes, and found that in my haste there were tares among my wheat. This has given me an unnatural sort of caution, and I perhaps walk more carefully than many men of slower temperature. One thing that makes me hesitate is, that my good friend says nothing of religious advantages; certainly he knows my principles, and that I would not willingly mislead my hearers; but he utters no word upon the subject, which ought to be the grand mover in every Christian parent who seeks an abiding residence for his children."

Michael's hopes outran his fears in this business, "he could not help thinking," he

told Mr. Lascelles, "that such a man that sought a residence in his parish could not be adverse to true religion." "My good friend, I do not think he is adverse, but a man who trains youth should be *warm* and zealous in the best of causes." Michael agreed that it *should* be, and the affair stood over so long, that Mr. Lascelles received another letter more pressing, and the concluding clause seemed to settle the business. It was to this effect: "I am the more anxious to come into your neighbourhood, as I feel the importance for my rising family of those principles which I know you have long taught. A ship is a village at sea, and I am sure I have reason to be thankful that I ever sailed with my captain, whose consistent life and example awed the profligate, and confirmed the sober. What he was to me I can never know in this world; he is gone to that Saviour whose despised disciple he was, and even those who basely called him hypocrite and cant, well knew that he was one of those of whom the world was not worthy." Mr. Lascelles was at his breakfast table when he received this letter, in that very room where his mother had delighted to train the myrtle over her parlour window; and Mrs. Lascelles was at that moment standing with her back to him,

tending the shoots of a fine myrtle she had also trained over the same window, knowing that it revived pleasing sensations in the mind of her beloved partner. She was thus employed, when she heard him say, "Well, this will do. Yes, yes, we will have him here, if it pleases God to prosper us;" and she turned round with an inquiring look, "My love?" "Yes, my love, Ferguson is just the man I could have wished." His wife smiled. "Has he told you so, love?" "No, no, he has not told me so, Mentoria, but his letter pleases me," and he passed it into her hand.

Matters were in this train, and nothing wanting but the ample cottage; when Brownrigg (who about once in a quarter of a year called at the Rectory) inquired if Mr. Lascelles were at home and disengaged. Michael Meredith was with him. In this boy's countenance was all the openness of his mother, with somewhat of his father's fine contour. He had so many friends to tell him what he should do, that combined with the natural ease of his own character, he was what may be called a well-behaved child. Placed in a room where many things were new to him, there was no need to tell him not to touch; his eye wandered over the room in silence, and he was particularly attracted by a

model of the rock of Gibraltar, which was finely executed; and under a glass, on a small table, the opposite shore of Africa was also sketched, just sufficient to admit of the representation of a small ship passing between the straits. The impression of this beautiful curiosity was so strong, that it gave a decided turn of the study of geography in the mind of this active lad. Mr. Lascelles, with a courtesy which never forsook him, opened his writing-case, and showed his young visitor a drawing of the same place. "I was once stationed there," said he, turning to Brownrigg, "and this model was executed by a servant of my own, whose ingenuity has since brought him forward." "I called on you, Sir," said Brownrigg, "from my nephew Mr. Kemp, to say that he has heard Mr. Jennings has a large cottage to let, and that he had deputed me to look at it, which I have done with as much care as possible; and I think, that with very little alteration at the expense of about fifty pounds, it may make a very decent residence. You may be sure I was closely beset by the ladies: 'Was it for a family or a single gentleman?' 'Perhaps some gentleman that was just going to marry?' 'Do you know such a one, ladies? For my part, all my friends are provided for.'

'Oh!' said Miss Tiny, whose assurance is most undaunted, 'we did not know but what Mr. Joseph was going to settle in these parts; we thought it might be natural that Mr. Kemp might wish to have his brother near him.' 'I do not think Mr. Kemp has such a wish, ladies. Joseph Kemp gets his living very decently, and I should not think so wise a man as my nephew would run any risk of unsettling his brother.' 'Had I any relation?' 'No, ladies, I am a valuable bit of china in very fine preservation,' and I drew myself up, and looked as tall as I could, Sir, and squared my elbows like the handle and spout of an antique teapot. 'You see I am as well kept as a choice morsel from Queen Elizabeth's cabinet, the more valuable from being a single piece.' The ladies seemed puzzled, Sir, and their inquiries went no farther; so that, if you wish your friend's name not mentioned, I have done no mischief." Mr. Lascelles had a relish for humour, and did not dislike the dry drollery of Brownrigg's character, but he was cautious how he encouraged any species of mental dissipation, more particularly with those whose time seemed *too* valuable to be thus played with; so assuming a mild, yet grave air, he said, "I do not think my friend Fer-

guson would at all object to having his name mentioned, though I see no necessity to gratify such unbounded curiosity. He is an excellent creature, and his nice little wife may perhaps prove a kind friend to these trifling young people, who certainly want some one to direct them, having too indulgent a father, and too gentle a mother, properly to brace minds so relaxed by folly. Ferguson, Sir, is a man about our standing, a thoughtful sensible fellow, who feels the worth of time, and employs it well; and I am happy to add, what I certainly did not know till lately, that he is duly impressed with the importance of eternity. Now such a one with a wife like-minded, may be incalculably useful to these light ladies, so that in fixing them near, I hope I am killing two birds with one stone. Thanks to you, my kind Mr. Brownrigg, for your active exertions in this business."

We need not tell our readers that Mr. Lascelles was understood, that these side blows lost not their aim. The acuteness of the perception of our Esther's uncle was such, that the drift of every conversation was perfectly understood, and this thought passed his mind. "Ferguson is not such a trifling fellow as poor old Brownrigg. I comprehend you, my

good Sir; you cannot only kill two birds with one stone, but there is but a slight gradation between the trifling Miss Jennings and the trifling old Brownrigg." Thus cogitated the good-natured tobacconist, and had really forgotten where he was, when young Michael burst out, "Oh, there is a pig in the garden!" and was off like an arrow to drive it out; and Brownrigg, thinking his mission finished, made his best city bow, assured the excellent pastor, that if there was any thing else he could do in the business it would give him great satisfaction, he being an idle fellow, and quite at his service. So they parted, mutually pleased with each other, Lascelles liking the good temper of Brownrigg, and Brownrigg by no means displeased with the pastor's gentle concern for his improvement of time. No, it was in the way of his duty, and he liked to see *every man perform his duty*.

Michael did not fail to find much opposition to every plan he adopted for the benefit of the poor; even farmers, whose pockets he was endeavouring to save from the hand of needless extravagance, were perpetually throwing some obstacle in the way to any end at any point, which their good sense had not suggested. There were gifts in the parish, and these were much abused: it

had been usual to divide the sum among the farmers, and leave them to distribute it as they pleased; they of course gave their own work people, so that whether deserving or otherwise, whether at ease or in want, they had what is called their share. Now Michael thought this an abuse, it was for the relief of the indigent, and, as overseer of the poor, he knew his right, and kept the whole sum, resolving to apply it as necessity should require. Now he was aware that his character would lie open to the undeserved censure of keeping this money, so he was particularly cautious, and kept a book for the separate entry of every shilling he disposed of, and had given a formal receipt to the person who brought him the interest. At the first vestry after this, two of the farmers said, "Mr. Kemp, Sir, we have not as yet—" Michael knew what was coming, but he was determined not to anticipate. "Mr. Kemp, Sir," said the other, "the legacy money—have you received it, Sir?" "Yes, Sir, I have;" and Mr. Lascelles immediately said, "and I have received my part of it." A sly old farmer, who disliked Mr. Lascelles the more, because he deserved all his love and all his veneration, said, "Oh, no doubt, Sir; but we" and then, with an inquiring look at Mr.

Jennings, said, " Have you, Sir, received any of the money?" " *Not one shilling*," with stress laid upon every word. Michael made no reply, but rising, asked Mr. Lascelles if he would permit him to show the copy of that clause in the testator's will which was lodged in the church chest? " Undoubtedly, Sir." So Michael took the key, produced the document, and read as follows: " This sum of thirty-six pounds half-yearly interest shall be paid into the hands of the rector and the overseer of the poor for the time being, to be applied to the use of the industrious poor who endeavour to keep their families in decent respectability." There was a murmur among the farmers; some said, they had never heard this before, they wondered how it came in the chest. Mr. Lascelles, looking kindly round, said, " At the time, gentlemen, this noble legacy came to our parish, I was a school-boy, and my excellent father employed me to copy it in the very letter and spirit of the testator; and if you observe, here is written at the bottom, in my father's own hand, " I have had this copy, that the money may be applied exactly for the purposes designed." For myself, gentlemen, I never have given one shilling to those who had relief from the parish, because I was quite aware that this

money was designed to add some comforts to that class of persons to whom it was bequeathed, and not to pass into the pockets of the farmers by lessening parish rates." The farmers smiled at each other, and old Jennings observed, "it would not go far in such a parish as that." "Very true," replied the pastor, "therefore there is the less temptation to violate the will of the donor." So Michael gave his part with great care, according to the necessities he witnessed, going carefully through the parish, and inquiring into the solid wants of each of the parties. Some wanted linen, some coals; one poor old man, who had kept his cottage, and done every thing to fence out the weather, yet could never afford to have his windows mended, was made comfortable by half the sum being applied to this purpose; and as Esther walked with him in his rounds of inquiry, all her ingenuity was employed in cheap but useful thoughts for bettering the condition of those she visited; and how often has she come away sighing and lamenting there was so much left to be done. But the blessings of those who were ready to perish was upon them, and when inquiry was made, it was found that not one in ten of those persons for whose use this money was designed ever received it; none, in

short, but those to whom Mr. Lascelles had given it; and yet, by the silent operation of that homeborn principle, natural affection, the parish was relieved, and they could not understand how; the rates were lowered, that they found, and yet the doctor had been sent for whenever there was occasion, and Mr. Kemp had not contracted for yearly attendance, they could not tell how he had done it; they must own he had managed very well, but then Mr. Lascelles gave away a great deal of physic to be sure. "But that is no new thing," said a young farmer, who had just come to the parish; "I have heard he always *did* give away." "Well, well," said one, "I do think he has managed very well." "Yes," said another, "I think he has, and the people all seem pretty well satisfied too." "Not all," said Mr. Jennings, rising up. "No," said the dry old farmer, "not your drunken carter, who spent every shilling given him last year at the Feathers." Jennings grinned, and the party broke up. The trials of life, viewed with the Christian's eye, have this tendency; they teach him, that however blessings are scattered in his path, this is not his rest; and even when he feels mercy encompassing him on every side; when his cup runs over with wordly

prosperity, in this moment he rejoices with trembling; he would not live always, he well knows that for him to depart is far better, yet all the days of his appointed time he waits till his heavenly Father says, "Come up higher."

Michael and Esther were so completely devoted to God, so convinced of the nothingness of every thing here to satisfy a Christian mind, that their dangers arose not so much from any thing worldly as from the continued respect, love, and veneration of all with whom they stood connected. Happily they were aware of this, and never ceased to warn each other; and one morning, as they were walking to church, and Betty Smith had gone on before them with their two little ones, the sun shining brilliantly, all nature in her richest dress, Esther said, "I know not how it is, my dear, but I tremble lest I should be too happy, too satisfied with the blessings which surround me." "My love, I do not see any deadness in your heart towards God"—"Neither do I feel it, but we seem really so encompassed with mercy, and at this moment so entirely without trial, that I cannot but fear." "I think," said her good husband, "he that knoweth whereof we are made best knows what we must be; he seems to have given us all

things richly to enjoy, but he can also defend us in this danger." And when in the Litany they came to that part, "In all time of our wealth, good Lord deliver us," they looked round at each other involuntarily; and Esther, slipping her hand into Michael's, pressed it with tender affection, and the beautiful aspiration, "Good Lord deliver us!" was breathed with unusual fervour. But although they seemed surrounded with the goods of this life, it was no small trial to them to see the decline of those they loved, and to watch the increasing feebleness of the aunt Margaret and the parent Mary. It is true, they still walked to church side by side, and still were seated carefully at the upper end of Michael's pew; and still that pale faint star, glimmering in the dawn of a brighter day, was watched with pleasure by those who foretold the coming radiance. Yet Esther could but remember that the lot of all living awaited them, and could but tremble in the anticipation that ere long she must see those eyes which always dwelt with delight and kindness upon her, closed for ever. But it was only when they looked increasingly feeble that she felt thus. By the side of their own quiet fire, with every little comfort that age needs, a cleanly little maid that brother Jonathan

had appointed to wait upon them, and above all, hearts tuned to his praise, who thus inclined all hearts to love them, under these circumstances, it was delightful to contemplate them, and the withering hue of age was forgotten. "It is long since you came to see us," said Michael to Margaret; "we wish to have you again soon." "Ah, my good young man, we must give that up, I believe, your hill is too much for us;" and when Esther thought, "Ah, they have been to the Brow for the last time," she walked to the window to hide her tears. But if these good women did not go out, they had plenty of visitors at home, among whom, the most constant, was our old friend Jem Brown: he never forgot the days when his clove-pink was gathered in a wrong spirit. Indeed, this young man, who had in his early days given such pain to his uncle, and all that wished him well, was now exemplary for kindness to his relative, and to those who needed his care; and as they were one day sitting together, "I owe you much," said Jem. "Mrs. Beal; never can I forget the lessons I received at your fire, from you and your excellent husband; he was a good man, wise, and mild." "Ah, we shall soon meet again." "Then," said James, "you do think we

shall know one another?" "To be sure I do," said Margaret; "'those who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him again.' 'I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me,' says David. And was not Lazarus in Abraham's bosom? And are we to suppose that the thief upon the cross was the only one with Christ in Paradise? Surely not. No, no, James Brown, depend upon it, we shall all meet together, we shall all appear before his judgment-seat; and those who trust in him here, and live to his glory, they will join in the same song in one glorious company, singing, 'Worthy is the Lamb who hath washed us and redeemed us.' No, no, I will never believe but where knowledge is perfect, we shall have that pleasant knowledge, the knowledge of one another." "Ah," said James, "it is very pleasant to think of meeting, when we know that our friends have loved the Lord Jesus. But, Mrs. Beal, suppose my father had not been a good man, and suppose I should miss him?" "Ah, James, such knowledge is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it, child; I don't know how you find it, but I am often obliged to stop in the midst of all my inquiries, and to say, 'Lord, thou knowest,' and again, 'he doeth all things well.' But here," said Margaret,

in her usual arch manner, when she was about to say any thing she thought conclusive, "I am thinking that he who has brought me through all my life in peace and safety to the present hour, is worthy of all my trust and confidence, and with him I am ready to leave what I am too weak to understand." "Mrs. Beal, you are sure to be in the right, and I know for why; because you put your trust in him who never fails to satisfy the soul that relies on him." "Why, James Brown, I think I am on the safe side." "That you are indeed," said James. These intimate conversations made James's little visits to his neighbour so pleasant, that he was always dropping in when he had a spare half hour. It lay in his way home, and had it not, he would have made a curve to visit the cottage of his early friends; and often has James seen the neat Peggy with a small basket of Brownrigg's grass, or his little dish of peas carefully saved and exhibited, we must own, with somewhat of pride, before any one in the parish could get them. He would often say, "Mine is a small concern, but it is well looked after, and ye see I can have my peas before the rector." This harmless vanity offended no one but the Scotch gardener; he thought it reflected on his care.

As for James Brown, he laughed at it, and was glad in his heart to see his old friends so kindly attended. But he noticed the little Peggy: her very neat appearance, her costume, not at all like that of the modern maid-servants, but after Brownrigg's own notions of propriety and cleanliness.

"Well," said James, "if I ever do marry, that girl shall be my wife, if she will have me." But he was aware of one thing, that Mr. Brownrigg would hardly consent; and there was another subject on which he was not quite certain, Was she a Christian? Of this he was uncertain; he knew that Betty Smith was fond of her; he often saw them come out of church together, and once he overheard her talking about the sermon to Betty; he thought these were good signs, and he was disposed to notice every thing favourable; but we are happy to add, he determined to make this part of the matter quite sure before he opened his mind.

It was in one of his visits to neighbour Beal's cottage, that Peggy came in with a very nice chicken and some brocoli, and she blushed and curtsied, and looked down when James Brown opened the door to let her out; and after she was gone, James said, "Mrs. Beal, what a nice girl that is." Margaret's eye looked brilliant, and

her brow was curved as she repeated, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, James Brown, mind that." James was about to declare he did not covet, but he coloured up to the ears as red as scarlet; and Margaret could not help laughing at him, and looking very firm upon him, "I see you have got a conscience, James, an honest conscience, and I am very glad to see it." James said, "he was in a hurry," and slipped off, and it was some time ere he again visited Margaret.

We are pleased to inform the reader how principle went hand in hand with practice in this once wild lad; he had seen the conduct of Michael through every stage, and could not but admire it, and he determined to make it his pattern. He was anxious to have a quiet home that he might call his own; and though his uncle's little cottage was made comfortable by the services of a neighbour, still it was not like having a place with a mistress at the head of it, and he thought it would be better for the poor old man to have some one always at home; in short, his wishes and his duties seemed to agree.

The difficulty lay in how to accomplish this, so he thought he would con-

sult Michael. Michael liked the idea extremely well; he foresaw that Brownrigg would not quite approve it, he advised complete openness both with Mr. Lascelles and Mr. Brownrigg. So James took his opportunity, when his excellent lady was one morning in the green-house reading, to collect some of the very finest carnations, a sprig of cape jessamine, and as he placed them in a vine leaf, and laid them on a small table which stood before her, he bowed. His lady, in her sweet manner, said, "Thank you, James; you do raise me the sweetest flowers, and the buds of your carnations are so perfect." She saw he stopped, and looked as though he had something further to say; and this good lady was so much in the habit of inquiring into the wants and wishes of all her people, that she continued admiring the flowers to encourage him. He was encouraged. "You are so good, madam, so kind, and master is so good and kind." "I hope you do not wish to leave us, James." "I don't know, madam, not perhaps;" and he seemed unable to go on. At length, however, "I had some wish to settle, madam, and Mr. Brownrigg's Peggy." "Ah!" said Mrs. Lascelles, "very nice little girl, very suitable indeed.—Yes, yes, James; and what do you wish me to do?" "Only

to advise me, madam." "How long have you and Peggy had a liking for each other?" said Mrs. Lascelles. "Oh, madam, I have never spoken to Peggy; I thought it better not to unsettle her mind till I had spoken to her master." "Well, that was very right, very honourable, just as it should have been. Then you are going to Mr. Brownrigg, are you?" "Madam, I have no acquaintance with Mr. Brownrigg." Here his mistress could hardly suppress a smile. "What do you wish, then?" "I thought perhaps, as my master would be so good as to speak for me." "Very good; but first, I think you should just mention the matter to Peggy." Under this sanction James was not long ere he found an opportunity; he waylaid Peggy, who blushed, and feared, and objected;—"was sure master would never consent, he was mighty particular—it was not every body that would suit him, she knew his ways, he had been a father to her, she would not ill use him for the world. Master was comical, to be sure, but master was the kindest creature. Oh, he was so good to me when I was poor and friendless, and I have never wanted for kind looks and kind words since I knew him." But it all ended, that if master made no objection— James did not permit her to

finish, but thanked her, and immediately communicated the happy tidings to Mrs. Lascelles. The good pastor was of opinion that James had better himself call upon Mr. Brownrigg; he thought, from what he had seen of that upright man's character, the more direct and simple people were in their dealings with him, the more they were likely to succeed. In short, he advised the most unreserved conduct.

So James that very evening called on Mr. Brownrigg, with some very fine seeds of the dark sweet william, a flower he was cultivating most sedulously, and had them in such rich variety as to equal the most beautiful exotics. He saw that James lingered, as though his business was not finished, and he said, "Is there any thing, James Brown, that I can do for you." James took courage. "Yes, sir, there is indeed; my happiness depends upon you, sir." Brownrigg started as though he did not like to have it in his keeping, and asked him gravely what he meant, at the same time walking up to the glass in his own manner, pulling the folds of his neckcloth quite smooth, to wait James's reply. As soon as he came to the word Peggy, Brownrigg understood him. "So, sir, you have brought me sweet williams, and you would take away my queen Margaret,

and you have been tampering with the girl, I know it; why, she brought my shaving cup full of cold water this morning, a thing I never knew her do in my life; left the stair-case window shut; in short, the girl's head seems good for nothing, and it is you, I suppose, who have turned her brain." James declared he had only spoken to the girl the night before, and he had acted upon the advice of his mistress Mrs. Lascelles, or he should have spoke first to Mr. Brownrigg himself. "Well, well; why, all this is mighty fair, and very honourable; but, for me, it is rather inconvenient, sir. Now observe, I have trained this girl since she was as high as my knee; she knows how to do every thing for me; I am a man of fixed habits, and if you have a mind to make me uncomfortable, if you had studied for a month, sir, you could not have done it more completely than to take my little Peggy away from me.—By the way, what did she say to you when you made this foolish proposition? I dare say you told her, she was a very pretty girl." "Indeed, sir, I did not." "Why, perhaps there is no occasion, I dare say the girl knows it. Though, come, come, I won't say she is a vain girl, she is a very good little thing. But was she willing to

go away, tell me what she said, sir." "She would *not leave you*." "Little cunning jade, she knew the way to my heart," and he whispered something about mother Eve. "Well, sir, when people marry they have generally some plan to make the pot boil, unless perchance you are a poet, and live by your wits. What may your intentions be?"

Poor James suffered much during this inquiry, he was a generous lad, and he felt that what he had to offer was by no means equal to his own wishes; but he gathered courage. "I have saved a little, sir, and my uncle has always promised me the cottage he lives in, and the one next door to it, sir. They are both his own, and when my uncle dies, he has often told me he will leave me all he has. I don't suppose, sir, as it's very much, but my uncle has always lived decent upon his little, and what he got by being clerk." "Well, sir, but your uncle must still live, you will not kill him out of the way; and while he lives, I want to know what you have got to support a wife." "Why, sir, I am making eighteen shillings a week, and my master is so very kind, that I have many little advantages in attending his house. Whenever he kills a pig, I have always a bit for my uncle; and then, sir,

he allows me to take care of the poultry: there used to be a woman, she never could contrive to keep them out of the garden, and that did vex Andrew. We have a nice court at my uncle's, I keep them there, and my master is very generous, and satisfies me very handsomely for my trouble."

Brownrigg fidgetted, he did not much like such a provision for Peggy. Unless she married to be as well off as she was now; he could not bear the thought of her marrying at all. James saw that Brownrigg was not satisfied, and stood like a culprit; and Brownrigg, who had seated himself in his arm-chair, kept smoothing down the elbow of it, and seemed to be casting up the sum total of poor James's gains. "Well, Sir, I should like to have a little conversation with Peggy; if I find the girl's heart at all in the business, Jonathan Brownrigg is not a man to consider himself, and make others unhappy." It was well for James that he had learnt in the Christian school the best of all lessons, submission, and what in reality was an exercise of a religious nature, Brownrigg supposed to be respectful obedience to his will. This certainly gratified him, and went further towards obtaining his consent than any thing James could have said, and

from that day the good-natured bachelor was contriving what he could do to make the young people happy. Many schemes passed through his mercantile mind, and were rejected as soon as formed. At length he determined to inquire for a little maid to be trained for his own convenience; and he looked for a little ground for a nursery garden, for the benefit of the young people. "A nursery garden is the most natural means for their subsistence; James understands it," said he, "and among us we might support him;" and from this time Brownrigg kept his eye upon any little freehold land that he could purchase. Now, though this interrupted his happiness in one case, yet it was a continual source of amusement for him. Plans of various kinds, which he formed to serve Peggy, and not to injure Esther; the continual activity of his mind, the repeated walks he took, and the inquiries he made in every direction, whose field that was, awakened curiosity in many parts of the parish, and in none more than in the minds of his amiable friends the Miss Jennings's. "Oh! so the old gentleman is going to marry at last some fine London lady, I suppose; whoever it was, she would have a fine life of it with Mr. Buckram." Young Mr. Jennings heard that

he counted the threads of his wristband, that it might fit him exactly; and Miss Louisa said, she saw him cutting out his own linen. "Well now, Louisa, "did you really?" said her brother; "well, that is a good one." Miss Louisa declared she did.

Now, reader, it is very true that Brownrigg was cutting a strip of cloth: as Miss Louisa passed the window one day, he was trying to bind a book, and this strip was to put at the back. It is no uncommon thing to see false conclusions drawn from slighter premises; but the good man went on heedless of any remark, and at length succeeded in the purchase of five acres not very far from his own dwelling. This he determined to let at a reasonable rent, payable to himself for his life, and afterwards for the sole and separate use of his little niece Jemima; the rent was so moderate for the first five years, that he did not get interest for his money, because he wished the young folks to get forward. After this term, he settled that it should be raised according to its value.

This settlement for James and Peggy seemed to please every one, and it certainly gave new life to Brownrigg. The purchase of the land secured, he was turning all his thoughts to the elevation of a

neat small green-house with a cottage adjoining, fully at liberty to watch his work-people; after having laid his plans, and consulting every work, new and old, published on the subject. Small as the place was, it abounded with conveniences: one thing alone seemed to fidget Brownrigg. James did not know Latin, and this he ought to know, in order to understand his plants. For several days he was casting about how to supply this defect. As James was Mr. Lascelles's servant, he thought he would consult with him upon the subject, and he suggested a plan which delighted Brownrigg: it was this; that the little Meredith should be sufficiently instructed in this language to supply James's deficiency; "and, after a time," said Mr. Lascelles, "who knows but the fair boy may become a nurseryman too."

It may be remembered how sedulously Stephen's father cultivated the level Bit, and there was something of the same spirit in the whole family. This rising lad was delighted with the idea of his own consequence, and was often by the side of Brownrigg at the new building. Oh, if there were but one spirit in us all, a spirit active and benevolent, desirous to do good, and pleased with promoting the happiness of others, performing every act of

useful life under the blessing of God our Saviour; even this fallen world hath many chosen spots, where we might raise our Ebenezers, and sing praises to his name.

We should not have dwelt upon this apparently immaterial part of our story, were it not to note what often occurs in the order of divine Providence, viz. small circumstances forming links in the great chain. Here was Ferguson, Brownrigg, James, and even the little Michael Meredith, all necessary actors in the scene; but the grand and most delightful part was, the frequent intercourse of Brownrigg and Mr. Lascelles, an intercourse which removed his prejudice, yet strengthened his attachment, and made him listen to his instructions with partiality, and even delight. When the house was nearly finished, "My dear mother," said Esther, one day, "did you observe how my beloved uncle seemed rivetted in his attention last Sunday. Oh, if he should become a Christian!" "He will," said her aunt, "rely upon it, Jonathan Brownrigg is not far from the kingdom of God. Remember, child, how many hands are lifted up for him daily; I pray for him and your mother, and do not you?" "Indeed, aunt, I do." "And to whom do we pray, my dear child? to a God who

heareth prayer, to whom all flesh shall come."

In this delightful train, circumstances led on, and all that Brownrigg saw, and all that he heard, increased his admiration, and taught him to value the principles from which such consistent conduct flowed.

It was on the evening of a most glowing day, and when the sun seemed unwilling to quit the horizon, and left its richest tints on the surrounding scene, that Brownrigg lingered later than usual at the fireside of his sisters. "Why, my good old women," said he; they waited, as this was commonly the prelude to something kind, they would not anticipate or break in upon him. After a considerable pause, clapping his hand upon the shoulder of Margaret, he said, "What would you say, if your old obstinate brother was to become a Methodist, eh?" Margaret turned her head, and looking at him most benevolently, said, "Why, I should say, 'Praise the Lord, Oh, my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'" "Then you may begin to say it, for I am convinced that your sentiments are the only ones that will bring a man peace at the last: they are the Bible sentiments, they are the Church

of England's sentiments, and they are mine. I have long wished to tell you, but I am a proud old fellow, and I did not like to own that I was wrong, and you were right, and *had been* for so many years." "Oh, my beloved brother," said Mary, and she rose, throwing her arms round his neck, "How does this day make my existence doubly sweet to me. Very dear, very pleasant art thou to me, my brother Jonathan." And they all three wept together; and from that day it may be said they were of one heart and of one mind. They continued going to the temple, eating their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and in favour with all the people.

How this delighted the heart of the good rector it may easily be conceived; he went on (silently) his way, watching one and another, pointing out a false step there, encouraging the weak believer, while, with those more advanced, more firmly established, he was stirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance. Time seemed to wing more swiftly with him as he advanced, and he felt that for him it was important to gather up every remnant, that nothing might be lost. His dear children were answering all his wishes, they were beginning to visit the

poor, especially the sick; they were watching the schools, and advancing every plan established by their excellent parents. In fine, as their activity must naturally relax, it seemed likely to be supplied by the attention and willingness of these rising dear ones; who, though fit for any society, however polished, were ready to be all things to all men, so that they might win some. How much it were to be wished, that all the daughters of our clergy were thus trained to walk in all the commandments of the Lord blameless.

It was on a warm summer's evening that James Brown, passing the corner of the green lane, had shaken hands, and said, "Good night, Peggy." When he thought, "well, I will walk up to the Brow, and will call upon my old friend." It was true, Brownrigg was extremely kind, but his kindness was on Peggy's account, and his uncle was too old to afford him any counsel or consolation, and the poor fellow seemed for the first time in want of some one on *his* side to say, "James Brown is an honest lad, and worthy of Peggy." Michael most kindly entered into his feelings; but their conversation will best explain.

Esther was at work; Michael was sitting by her, amusing his little ones with

pictures in an old Bible, and telling them the history of Joseph and his brethren; when James entering, stroked the little girl's head, and looking earnestly at her father, said, "I am come to spend an hour with you." Rose soon came in to put the young things to bed, and they sat for some moments in silence. "I think," said James, "I think I have had this stick fifteen years."

Michael. It is nothing but a bit of hazel.

"It is such an old friend; it was with this very switch I was cutting off the head of a nettle, when you persuaded me not to go that Sunday to Mrs. Priddle's. How many things have passed since that time. You were going to the Valley, Michael. Poor old master was alive then; you know you went away, and I got into a scrape with those gypsies. Surely God has been very good to me; I do not think I would part with this stick for the lord mayor's gold-headed cane." Michael and Esther both looked at him with love and admiration, as they listened to this recital of his feelings. "Your uncle is uncommon kind to me," addressing Esther, "and I am continually obliged to say it and to feel it; but I seem to stand alone in the world, and want some one to say, 'Jem Brown is not an ungrateful

man.'" "I have said *that*, my dear fellow, over and over again, and Mr. Brownrigg does not need the assurance, for he has a very good opinion of you." "Well, I am very glad of it; but you do not know what it is, Michael, to have to say, 'Thank you, thank you,' and have nothing to offer in return." "No, you need not say that, James, for you offer an honest hand and heart; and if my uncle is to let you ground, you labour for the fruit of it," said Esther. James seemed relieved. Every generous bosom will feel for Jem, and every Christian will acquit him, under that declaration of our Lord, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." But however he might feel, we must say, that Brownrigg, his benefactor, never thought of the favour he was conferring: he was concerned for Peggy's happiness as for a child of his own. But for any benefit he was conferring, it raised none but pleasurable sensations in his mind, and he did not for a moment consider James his debtor. This honest man had truly a great mind; he certainly was peculiar, but it was the peculiarity of an isolated being; in short, he was an old bachelor, had a place for every thing, and every thing in its place; and if his temper was sometimes ruffled, it arose from

the conviction that his own plans were right, and he did not like to have them deranged. The only really blameable part of his character had been his prejudice against true religion—that was now removed, and he seemed likely to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour. We cannot hope that he has many years to continue, but we venture to predict that his remaining course will shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. One sweet evidence of his sincerity was the concern he felt for others. No sooner did the glow of genuine piety warm his own bosom, no sooner did he see the gulf from which he had been delivered, but his heart yearned over all whom he knew. He thought of Mrs. Tucker, his friendly old neighbour; even Mrs. Potter shared his care;—he wished he could see her, he wished he could persuade her, poor thoughtless creature, and he felt that he had passed from death unto life, by the glowing principle of love which warmed his bosom.

> "This is the grace that lives and sings,
> When faith and hope shall cease;
> 'Tis this shall strike our joyful strings
> In the sweet realms of bliss."

About this time, nearly a fortnight after James Finch arrived at the Brow on one

of his accustomed visits, he received a letter from his sister Jemima; and as we know our readers are partial to this amiable young woman, we do not scruple to give a copy:

" My dear James.

" I do sadly miss you, and next to the pleasure of having you with me, will be that of hearing from you; and I write, as I promised you, the very first leisure moment. You will be concerned to hear that Mr. Cooper has been very ill, and my dear mother is constantly with him, endeavouring all she can to relieve Mrs. Cooper from the fatigue of nursing, which is still very great. You know the sweet natural temper of all parties, and you will feel for me, when I tell you how continually my dear mother keeps dwelling on Mr. Cooper's virtues, how fit he is for heaven; and if *he* is not fit to go to heaven, she cannot see who should. I did venture yesterday to say, ' Oh, my dear mother, it costs more to redeem our souls; we must let that alone;' and she is continually saying, ' Pure religion and undefiled before God, is this—to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.' ' Well, if any one ever did this, Mr. Cooper

has.' 'Indeed he has, my dear mother,' was my reply. 'Well, child, and yet you do not seem satisfied.' I was constrained to reply, and I only said, 'My dear mother, I love Mr. Cooper, and am under the greatest obligations to him, for he has been most kind both to you, to James, and to every body.' 'Well, child.' 'And yet, my dear mother, Mr. Cooper needs an atonement for his own sins; the blood of Christ can alone cleanse him.' 'Well, child, I know that; who denies that?' 'My dear mother, you dwelt so much upon his good works, that I thought you fancied that they could save him.' 'Well, child, and do you think he could be saved if he did not do good works?' I ventured again: 'My dear, kind, excellent mother, do not be angry with me, but these works must be the fruit of his faith, not the foundation of his hope.' Like Nehemiah, I prayed to the God of heaven, and I said, 'All our righteousness are as filthy rags, we must be clothed with a better righteousness, my dear mother.' I took the Bible out of my pocket, and I read with some emphasis that portion, the marriage feast and the address. 'Friend, how comest thou here, not having a wedding garment?' When I came to 'bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer

darkness,' I saw the colour rise in my dear mother's face, and she turned away, whether convinced or angry I know not; but I ventured yet further, and read that portion where our Lord says, publicans and harlots should enter the kingdom of heaven before Pharisees. I then kissed our dear parent, saying, 'Oh, my precious mother, never would your own Jemima thus talk to you, thus run the risk of offending you, if she did not love you most tenderly.' Dear creature, she kissed me, and went out of the room without speaking one word. I have often thought, my dear James, that our mother is not so prejudiced as she was; it is true, she never invites me to talk, but she is less offended certainly with any thing I say, and seems to consider it more, and I cannot but hope that the number of persons she sees walking consistently will do away her prejudices, and bring her to the foot of that cross where all sin was atoned for, and the work of salvation completed. You left your pocket Bible under the head of your bed, I shall take the greatest care of it, but not send it you for fear of accidents. Williamson sends you his duty; Ellen Meredith is in service at the next village, I am happy to say, in a quiet amiable family. She is so very handsome, that it

requires care where she is placed, and one or two families have declined her services because they had sons. I do most sincerely hope we shall be able now to establish her permanently; she makes herself so very useful with her needle, that in a large family she is a treasure. I write thus much about her, because I think her brother Mr. Meredith was looking out, and to prevent his taking unnecessary trouble. Her father and mother are going on as respectably as ever; I sometimes call and sit half an hour, and though, poor things, as yet they seem in darkness, there is something so beautiful in the order of their household, that I cannot help admiring and liking them, and hoping that they are not far from all we wish them.

God bless you, my dear James, make the most of your privileges; I long to see you, and yet I am delighted to have you where you are, under the eye of so kind a friend, and more especially under such a powerful and active ministry.

Believe me, your most faithful and affectionate sister JEMIMA FINCH."

It was about this time that poor Mary Humphries was afflicted with a serious illness, and the heart of her duteous daughter was pierced most deeply; but by good

medical attendance, and the constant watchings of her darling child, and prayer for the blessing of heaven, she was restored to her usual measure of health. Just at this time, by one of those fortuitous circumstances which sometimes involve serious consequences, Esther was passing by the dairy, where Michael was talking to Betty Smith, and she heard her say, "Why no, Sir, to be sure; but then I thought you would not make objections." "I never object to any thing reasonable, Betty, but it has gone on so long." Now Esther hated the post of a listener, but she could not think what had gone on so long; and a thought struck her, whether it was the illness of her mother which had occasioned the observation. It went to her heart to believe it, that her dear husband, so good, so generous and noble, should speak on the subject to Betty Smith; and she had nearly rejected the thought, when Betty came in, saying, "What be we to carry down to-day, Ma'am;" and Esther fancying she saw something peculiar in her manner could not help being persuaded that it related to the constant attendance that had been given, and the good things sent to her mother; yet she could scarcely believe it, and she was on the point of asking what

it was, when Betty's peculiar manner of "Very well, Ma'am," and leaving the room, stopped the inquiry.

None but very timid people, exactly Esther's character, can conceive how very difficult it is, when suspicion has once glanced over the mind, to dissipate the gloom it occasions. Esther looked pained and discontented, and remained silent; but she was not silent in prayer, never did she pray more earnestly. Michael was vexed at her reserve, he could not comprehend it; he saw something was wrong, and could not conceive why that wrong should not be communicated. At length, after two days of grief and wonder, the following conversation took place between them. The chapter that morning pointed to the infirmities of Christians, and the necessity of one bearing with another. Esther was much affected, and even wept; and after the servants had gone about their usual business, and they were left alone, she had the courage to take his hand, and owned she had been grieved about something "I knew it; but about what, my love? Why did you not speak?" And when she told him what had been her suspicion, and what had grieved her, he looked at her with a degree of astonishment

which convinced her she was mistaken. "The dear old Christian, that I should grudge any thing for her. Oh, Esther, you wrong me sadly," and it was some time ere she could bring him to contemplate the suspicion with composure. "We have been too happy, my love, the enemy of souls has envied our christian union; but never again, my dear Esther, suffer your mind to indulge so injurious a thought. No, let me entreat you, if any thing painful arises, speak to me directly. Do not suffer the imagined grievance to gain strength by delay: but Betty Smith must explain this, my dear Esther." So Esther, though she was really ashamed to acknowledge her thoughts to Betty, suffered Michael to call her; and after he had left the room, she enquired, "Can you remember, Betty, what it was when you were standing in the dairy with your master—what it was you were speaking of?" "Why, let me see, Ma'am; when was it, I am sure I don't know.—Oh dear, Ma'am, now I remember. Do you remember, Ma'am, that boy that went to master's quick? Oh no, Ma'am, that was before you married; I minds it well, it is now three months, I think, since that boy cut his hand, and master desired his mother to come every

day for a slice of bread and butter and a cup of milk. So every day that little girl comes with her basin for the milk, and the plate for her bread and butter; and it had gone on so long, that I thought it was time she should give over. But then again, if master did not mind, and mistress did not name it, I would not be their hindrance. So I said to master one day. ' Sir, there's that boy you allows the bread and butter to, I think it's nigh time they gave over sending; and yet, Sir, if you wishes, I am sure I would not make any objection.' ' Why no, Betty, it has gone on so long, so very long."' " Dear me," said Esther, " how could I be so foolish." " What, Ma'am." " Oh, Betty, it is no matter, only I have been very foolish." Betty, seeing her mistress did not intend to explain, walked away; and now Esther gave up to the regret which naturally filled her bosom, that she should for *one moment* indulge a suspicion of so kind and generous a character as Michael. She was bowed with concern that the weakness of her temper should have manifested itself in so ungenerous a manner. "Never, never again will I indulge a suspicion, only forgive me this once, my dear kind friend; and do thou, O Lord, pardon me." And while she was thus speaking, her

little wild girl ran in, in all the glow of health.

"Oh, mammy, oh mammy, you cry, you cry;" for this was the endearing title with which this infant addressed her mother. When Michael came in, she said, "My dear, how near I have been to all that is wrong."

"Say no more of it, my dear Esther, only let it be a lesson to us both never to doubt each other again."

With this resolve they separated to their various duties. It may be supposed, that this little disagreement lessened their high opinion of each other; but no, it made them watchful at those avenues where sin enters, and as it was the first, so it was the last cloud which ever shadowed their happiness.

The plans in Mr. Lascelles's village, especially that of the flax-spinners, had gained its highest point of excellence, and there was not a poor person in the village but had home-spun linen of their own, strong, neat, and decent: they were long ere they needed a darn, though at first it wanted whiteness. I dwell upon this, because I think decent appearance among the poor is often helpful to good morals. When they once reach that point of depression and indifference which beggars and

gypsies, and trampers, and that low train of mendicants which may be called the houseless poor, adopt, they are not far from vice. The very inactivity of such a state leads gradually to immorality. Those who respect not themselves rarely respect others, and the very extreme indifference to appearance meets the extreme care of it, and confirms the old adage, that extremes are dangerous.

Michael was passing through all the offices in his parish, and fulfilling them all under the influence of that text, "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it heartily." As churchwarden, he was particularly careful of the neatness and cleanliness of his church. It had been a rule to have the windows cleaned once a year, and a glazier was hired for the purpose, and this cost the parish nearly a pound, as it was lit in many corners, being an old-fashioned place. Michael proposed that each farmer should spare a man to clean one window, and so gradually get the whole done, and this once a quarter; he stood by himself at the operation, that he might see the ladder fixed to prevent breaking; and now, instead of the clouds that hung over the house of prayer, all was neat, clean, and pleasant. He had determined, should any pane be broke, he himself would stand

to the expense; but this was a measure which delighted the whole parish, the change which cleanliness effects is so visible, that it is readily felt and acknowledged, more especially when it saves the pocket, as it did in this instance; and Michael took an opportunity, while he watched the fellows, (who were the class employed in this service,) to say some word of the pleasure and the honour of any way contributing to the decent worship of God. "We should be ashamed to have our own houses dirty, and surely we should pay this respect to that place where we assemble to seek favours at his hand, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain." This little plan of Michael's gave him an opportunity of saying a word to those whom otherwise he would never have known; and in all these addresses, he lifted up his heart, and said, "Strengthen me this once, I pray thee."

Every little repair was attended to; the fastenings on the pews; if any of the hassocks were worn and littering, he called upon the proprietors, and begged they would be so kind as to have them mended; the walls were regularly swept down once a month, and during Michael's churchwardenry, Westrip gave up his clerkship. James Brown applied for it,

and was appointed; and these good young men went willingly hand in hand, delighted in the promotion of every thing that is good and excellent. But no office gave him so much trouble as surveyor of the roads, and in this he was obliged to influence others by the power of example. He performed all his statute work with a scrupulous fidelity, and he found all the farmers were performing more than they had ever done in a former year: some of them were obliged by the statute to give ninety teams, and though they would pretend to acquit themselves of this engagement, it was so imperfectly done as not to be worth thirty. He proposed that they should all combine to bring a given quantity together, and they had a sort of gala day for the road mending. "Let us do our part thoroughly," was his proposal, "and instead of throwing the materials into the pit, let us thoroughly clear it; and then, gentlemen, if you please, you will bring us your stores all together." By these means, putting his whole strength into it, and never suffering a rut to remain unfilled, keeping all the ditches open; by means of fair words and good example, he left the roads in perfect repair when he went out of office. He was succeeded by Mr. Henry Jennings, who very ungene-

rously observed, "I think, gentlemen, last year you had a sixpenny rate made for your roads, but you see I have brought you through without any additional expense." "Ah, Mr. Jennings, this will not do, this must not pass," said one of the farmers; "in what state did you find the roads? For my part," said this honest farmer, "if Mr. Kemp would be content, I would make him surveyor for ever. I like my money as well as any man, Sir, and I am sure Mr. Kemp did not lay out an unnecessary shilling." "You are right, Mr. Sturges," said old Jennings. "No, no, give every dog his due," and the worthy assembly laughed at Mr. Jennings's wit, and we may safely add, Mr. Jennings laughed with them.

We have said that Michael was churchwarden, and the year we have spoken of he was parishwarden; and in this parish, as in many others, the warden for the parish and that of the clergyman perform different services, taking care that each had their rights. Thus, for instance: when he became Mr. Lascelles' warden, he turned his particular care to his convenience; he engaged the grave-digger, for a small sum, to keep every little mound in the nicest order; and at the suggestion of the youngest Miss Las-

celles, who was passionately fond of ivy, and the whole tribe of creeping plants, he planted ivy all round the low wall of the church-yard; and as the little Michael Meredith had heard the story how uncle Michael used to sweep the paths at P—, this sweet boy was often found with his basket picking off the dead leaves and watering the fresh shoots by the side of Miss Lascelles; and how delighted the warm-hearted Fanny would be, when her dear boy seemed treading in the steps of his uncle, we can hardly tell the reader. Let those who have young ones accustom them to hear all interesting anecdotes of their religious friends, and even their early infant habits; but let them beware how they talk of sin, especially if that sin be accompanied by wit, cunning, and childish contrivance to cheat or deceive. These are winged seeds, which are sown by every highway-side; they need no culture, they ask no care, they, alas! but too well accord with the soil found in every heart. It was found that the books at church were much worn; Michael proposed new ones. Mr. Lascelles observed very sensibly and very kindly, "I must be careful that you are not too good to me, lest your kind consideration should bring you into disgrace. You have given me a new sur-

plice, you have taken the ragged lining out of my desk, and made me very clean and neat. No, I will wait till next year for my prayer-book." Michael saw and felt the kindness of this, and was not sorry, upon reflection, to avoid doing more, lest they should think him partial and prodigal. But there was one step which he took, attended with more difficulty than every other: it was the prevention of the number of persons usually assembling in the belfry; this had grown and increased. It is true that they were not noisy, as in some churches, but still there was bustle, and talk, and irreverence. One point Mr. Lascelles had gained, they no longer sung those frightful old tunes, anthems of a quarter of an hour, every one bawling, and all in a different key, and consequently the idle conversation in the singing gallery was stopped. But still this little party in the belfry thickened and increased, and the good rector, who was as remote from tyranny as may be conceived, was at a loss how to stop it. He knew, that till a better principle was imparted than he could give them, this evil must remain, unless some one in the parish who had power would assist him. Michael had felt, and determined to remedy this evil; he began thus: he went up to a

new lad, " My good young man, you live with Mr. Stukeley, I think? You do not know your pew, I will shew you." The lad looked sheepish, and bowed, and followed Michael. To another, " James, Thomas, had you not better go to your seat, Mr. Lascelles will be in presently." To a third, " I do not think your master would like to see you stand talking here." Then turning to the ringers, " You do not want these young men?" " Oh dear, no, Sir," winking and laughing at each other.

The business was done for this Sunday, but the next it was all to do again. Michael stood quietly, but spoke not; the assembly were hushed, but they moved not. There was somewhat of that sturdy rebellion which John Bull is subject to, when he fancies his right invaded. Sunday after sunday they were assembled in the same manner, and Michael proceeded in the same quiet way. Brownrigg was so fidgetted, that he longed to put down this persevering impudence with a high hand. Michael begged that he would not, and with difficulty succeeded. There was his erect form constantly in the pew, leering round to see what progress poor Michael made in the belfry; while Esther sat pale, trembling, and terrified. At

length, stirred to it by his young master, Mr. Jennings's carter, looking Michael steadily in the face, asked him if he should shew him his pew? To this our excellent young farmer hardly knew how to reply; and at length determined that there was dignity in silence; this he had often heard good Mr. Walker say, and this he found very salutary counsel, had he spoken under the impression of displeasure, he might not have spoken wisely; so he stood still till the service was over; then requesting a word with old Mr. Jennings, he stated the difficulty he had to preserve order, and his own conviction that Mr. Jennings wished it as well as himself, and requested it as a favour that he would speak to his carter upon the impropriety of his conduct that day. This slight compliment to Mr. Jennings, together with the mild address had its desired effect; and Jennings spoke with decision to his servant. His son was not so tractable; he observed, that "the governor (a name which he chose to give Michael) was a hard master; there was but one day in the week in which poor people might have a little pleasure, and in that day they were to be kept in order by Mr. Kemp. For his part, he loved to see them cheerful and happy; Mr. Kemp wanted to make them all as

sour and melancholy as himself." Old Jennings grew angry. "Harry Jennings, say what you will, Kemp is a good man, such a man as you would do well to imitate. I do not think any family in this parish is better governed, if so well; and it is but reasonable to say, that we ought not to go to church to laugh and talk. I wish you may make as good a master of a family, if ever you have one."

This point was completely gained; after a few more Sundays all was tranquil in the belfry, and it was not long before every trace of resentment was lost, and the common people went to their pews in the same orderly manner as their superiors.

The poverty of the Jennings's was coming on them like an armed man; the landlord seized for rent, every thing was to be sold, and this numerous family knew not what to do, or where to go. It was now that the Christians shone in native splendour, while the neighbours contented themselves, some of them saying, "Ah, poor man, I thought he was coming down;" others, with less pity, said, "it was what was to be expected, and what they all deserved, proud creatures as they were."

Michael went every day to talk to the old man, to consult what might be done,

and, if possible, prevail upon the creditors to assist in some way to provide for the old people. There was something due to himself, and about this he shewed the greatest kindness, trusting old Jennings when no one else would; and as for Esther, she would go to see the poor old woman, who was full of weakness and weeping, and talking about their being so come down; grieving that her daughters must work like poor people, never once glancing at her own imprudence, or regretting that they had been brought up beyond their means. But Esther's quiet good sense taught her that this was not a time to speak of what was wrong; no, she only soothed, patiently heard all the weak complaints, persuaded her to go out to take a little air. "Oh yes, mamma," said Tiny, "let the people see you are not afraid to be looked at. I think Mrs. Kemp is very right in that particular." "I think so too," said Miss Jennings; "there be some who like to see their betters come down; for my part, I would rather break than bend." The meek Esther could only look her disapprobation; but one day, when Michael was present, and these young ladies were saying something to the same effect, he observed, "that it became us to inquire whose hand was

upon us; if it was God's, surely we should bend under; that resistance was vain. What said our Saviour to Saul, 'it is hard for thee to kick against the goad.' Do not you remember, madam," turning to Mrs. Jennings, "what a fine sermon Mr. Lascelles gave us upon that text?" "Oh no, Sir," said Mrs. Jennings, "I never had a good memory, and since my troubles, what I have suffered has quite darkened it; I can hardly remember when churning day comes." "Well, madam, he said, these afflictions might be compared to the goad which drove the oxen to the path of duty; that if resisted, they only became more painful; if yielded to, we learned wisdom by what we suffered—" "Dear me," said Miss Tiny, "what a fine memory you have, Sir," glancing slightly at her sister. Michael had but one end in view, Esther the same, to be useful to these people. Not all their sneers, their stupidity and ingratitude, awakened any sensation but of pity; and as the nice young creatures walked home together, they only observed to each other, "they feared, they greatly feared that they should not be able to be of much use to them." "The only quiet one among them seems Amelia." "So I think," said Esther; "she never has been taken much notice of, she

seemed attentive when you spoke." "I observed she did." "Perhaps she would not object to take a service? Suppose you were to speak to her aside." This was done, and the despised daughter of Mr. Jennings, and the only one which the smart Mr. Henry had predicted would not be good for any thing, accepted a service in the family of a friend of Mrs. Lascelles; she was only house-maid, for at first she had nothing but her good-will to recommend her; but this good-will, as it always does, enabled her to perform cheerful service: she rose every day in the good opinion of her employers, who had no objection to her but her fine name; and this was done away as soon as she informed them she had another; and though at first she found it difficult to remember that her name was Jane, she soon became accustomed to it, and we are happy to say, during the first year of her service, sent her poor mother a nice straw bonnet made in the village school where she resided, had it neatly lined and trimmed with white; and when the mother got it, and found folded in one of the strings a sovereign, with these words, "Accept this trifle from your dutiful child, Jane Jennings," she could only walk about and cry. But Miss Tiny, who never could let

an opportunity slip when she might be pert and saucy, " Jane Jennings, dear me," said this flippant young lady, " I suppose they think it a sin to call her by her first name;" then, taking up the bonnet in her hand, " Why, it is a tidy little concern; why, you will look almost as good as Margaret Beal, when you go to church with your bow just straight. Well, I must say Jane Jennings is greatly improved." The meek mother could only sit and cry for joy and vexation, when the father came in. " Why, wife, what is the matter?" " Why, nothing, only I have a letter and a bonnet from poor Mely." " Why, Jane, you should say," said this pert miss. " I do wish you would let me speak." " Do hold that tongue of yours, girl," said her father. The mother told her tale, and shewed the letter, the bonnet, and the sovereign; the father's heart was touched, and the parents wept together, and he faintly articulated, " These Methodists have very good methods, that I will say for them. Pray how long," said the father, " do you girls intend to be idle here?" " Oh pa," said Miss Tiny, " we only wait orders, the things Mrs. Lascelles sent us are done, and gone home." " Well, that is a beginning," said her father; " but I should think there is a good deal to

do in our own house, children; I am sure I have not a wristband that fits me." This was an old story, and was sure to stir up disagreeable sensations; but times were altered, and these spoiled children saw they must either work at home or go out. Mrs. Lascelles, who had considered the subject in every form, had heard that some of the warehouses in town cut out their linen, and sent dozens of different articles into the country to make; and she thought this would be a certainty, if another employment did not come in, and she commissioned a friend in London to manage this for them. At first this was very disagreeable, but when the money came in they began to be in some degree reconciled.

The poor father had no resources, and the idle brother was lounging about, waiting for an exciseman's place, which their good-natured landlord was endeavouring to procure for him. At length he succeeded, and the overbearing young farmer went off to his new destination; but poor old Jennings was in great danger of losing his spirits for want of some regular employment. Mr. Lascelles saw this, and was very eager, if possible, to remove it: he wrote to his landlord, asking him what he intended to do, as the farm was not yet

let. "Are you going to take it in hand, Sir? If you are, I think some employment might be found for your poor old tenant, for whatever his faults may have been, he has certainly suffered very deeply." The landlord was a good-natured man, and in former days having passed some time in the sporting season at his own estate, knew the whole family well; he considered Mr. Lascelles's kindness in the right light, and for a time made the old man his bailiff; and though he now lived in a corner of the large house, his furniture being all sold, his girls being obliged to work, and his overbearing son out of the way, his life was really happier than it ever had been; he had an active servant under him, and he made Ellen put every thing down at night, so that, though slowly and reluctantly, these young people began to do something. At first, Mrs. Lascelles found it difficult to put up with the very ordinary work of these ladies. Miss Lascelles, who was singularly delicate in all she did, would frequently unpick and new make those articles in which they had been employed. This she did quietly and good-humouredly, without any irritable feelings; but after having two or three times borne it patiently and silently, the hem of a cambric muslin dress came

home a considerable depth on one side, while on the other it was very narrow. After carefully measuring, it was found impossible to repair the damage, and a repetition of these blunders were so frequent, that at length it was concluded that they were incompetent.

Esther Kemp happened one morning to be at the Rectory, when a very nice muslin gown was sent home in this imperfect state, and she good-humouredly offered to take it to these young women, and shew them the error. At first, Miss Lascelles strongly opposed it, but her mamma, though kindness itself, thought the plan a good one, and the kind-hearted Esther went on her disagreeable commission. Miss Tiny and her sister were in their littered work-room; Miss Tiny twisting up bits of cuttings, in comical figures, and declaring that one of them was very like old Brownrigg, when Louisa exclaimed, "Why, here comes the straight forward Mrs. Kemp with a little parcel in her hand, measuring every step she takes. Tiny, will you go down and let her in?" "No, that I won't," said Tiny. So Louisa passed by, giving her sister a slap as she went. The quiet good-humoured mother was sitting below darning her husband's stockings, and rose meekly to welcome

Mrs. Kemp, and hoped she was well, and Mr. Kemp and all her family, when she heard from them. Esther asked if the Miss Jennings's were at home. "Oh yes," and she went to call them. "My dear Louisa, here is Mrs. Kemp called to see you." "Oh yes, mother, I saw Mrs. Kemp coming up the serpent-twining walk. Good morning, madam," said Miss Louisa, with one of her easy bends, "beautiful weather," and she threw herself carelessly back with one arm hanging over a chair, the finger and thumb of the other hand placing a curl which had strayed too far on her really fair forehead. "You have been taking a pleasant stroll, I suppose?" "I have not been far, only to the Rectory; and Miss Jennings, I have brought you this robe of the youngest Miss Lascelles, and a pattern, and a piece more muslin. You must be so good as to unpick it, for it will not do any way. I shall be very willing to help you to alter it, and any thing I can do at any time I beg you will permit me." The fair brow of the lady lowered, the colour mounted to her cheek, she looked indignant, muttered a reluctant "Thank ye," with "Oh no, on no account; I was never brought up to study people's whims and fancies, was I, mamma? Papa never contra-

dicted me." "No, my dear," said Mrs. Jennings, winking; "but you must expect, Louie, that such gentlefolks as Mrs. Lascelles should be particular. I have heard, I don't know that it is true, that Mrs. Lascelles's relations are lords and dukes. Do you know, madam?" turning to Esther. She could only declare she did not, and sat with the work in her hand, waiting for Miss Jennings to receive it, which this young lady at length did most reluctantly, pulling it this way and that, saying she wondered what was the matter. "Well now, Louie, my dear, do not put yourself in a flurry." "A flurry indeed, how odd you are, mother; it would puzzle Mrs. Lascelles to put me in a flurry, I have been too much used to their whims." Poor Esther was really frightened, and could only continue offering her good services. But the frequent errors of Miss Jennings soon convinced Mrs. Lascelles she never could make mantua-makers of them, and their high spirits prevented their improvement: they could not receive reproof, they expected every one to come forward with some wonderful exertion of kindness, while they made no effort to deserve that kindness, and they were perpetually raving at the world, and

saying, when they were in prosperity, how kind *they* were.

One day, when they were running on in this foolish strain, the father said, "Kind, aye, very kind to yourselves; I think I never heard of any of you going to visit a sick neighbour, making any thing for the poor, like Mrs. Meredith; nice active young creature, there she is with her four children, with only a little girl to help her, always cheerful, and contriving to help others." "Dear me," said Miss Tiny, "I have been told that Mr. Stephen is as handy as a maid, knows exactly how long a piece of pork should be roasted, and commonly sees to the boiling of the potatoes." "Suppose he does," said the angry father, "nice young people walking hand in hand, helping one another, this is all right; every thing seems to go well with them—their pretty children, so happy and so gay, and their neat cottage so pretty, that all the gentry round come to draw it and put it on paper." "You mean to skitch it, pa," said Miss Tiny. "No matter what I mean, I mean one thing, that they are very happy and contented, they get their own living and help their parents; I mean that, miss." Thus did these misguided uncomfortable people

contrive continually to perplex and worry each other; never did they censure themselves, but most liberally did they condemn one another. The father blamed the children for his own misconduct; the children revolted, and thought themselves misused, and felt themselves unhappy; nothing was right, nothing gave satisfaction; and at length Miss Tiny, going to a neighbouring fair, drinking tea with some slight acquaintance, got acquainted with a corporal of a marching regiment who had a good person, and was in favour with his captain; and Miss Tiny thought he was in the road for a commission himself, and we think it very probable he held out something of the kind as an inducement to this ambitious young lady, for she was often heard talking of army, rank, &c. to which she had fixed no other idea than that it was something high, but she did not know what. However, the poor old folks never heard of it till the son-in-law came on the bridal morning to beg papa and mamma's blessing. He was a dashing looking fellow, and hope visited the bosom of the mother, though the poor father looked upon all the tale of promotion as mere deception, and said they had stuck another nail in his coffin.

Miss Louisa was now left alone with

her dull sister Eleanora Frances, and as Miss Tiny had rather piqued her pride to be the first of the family who settled in life, she began to turn her thoughts seriously to provide for herself; and one day, looking over the newspaper, she saw an advertisement for an active young person to serve in a haberdasher's shop, and that if they were steady and gave satisfaction, salary would not be an object. As it was somewhere near Walworth, it struck her that the old prig, as she always called Mr. Brownrigg, might be of some use to her; so she went to the Brow to talk about it. Esther, who was glad to oblige any one, undertook to speak to her uncle, and he knew the place well, and offered to write for her, and we are really glad to say that the situation was secured; and though at first she found some difficulties, she had sense enough to try to overcome them, and the last we heard of her was, she made herself useful, and got on pretty well. I really have been too long with these people, but if my young readers learn that such high-blown expectations must vanish, as baseless and irrational, I have not recorded in vain the history of the Jennings' family; the only being that remained to comfort her parents was the dull plodding Eleanora

Frances, who, when she had no longer sisters at home to mislead her, went on steadily, and was really a comfort to her poor father and mother. Yet still, as might be expected, these weak people would sometimes fondly dwell on those days when Louie and Tiny were the admiration of the squire, and when the Jennings's family made no mean figure at church on Sunday; and when Miss Louisa took a walk in the park arm in arm with a neighbouring shopman, she generally amused him with descriptions of her father's fine horses, and how often she had joined the hunt to the admiration of the neighbouring gentry. Poor Tiny's regiment was ordered to the West Indies, and this unhappy young creature closed her eyes there, having caught the fever almost immediately on her landing.

It may not be unpleasing to the reader to learn, that James Brown's affairs went on happily, and one feature in the character of this good lad we take pleasure in recording: the preparations of his own settlement in life never interfered with his duties as a servant; the Rectory garden was cultivated even with more care than usual, and when Mr. Lascelles paid his last wages, he told him that he did not expect to replace him. "You have been

a very faithful excellent servant to me, James;" and he replied, "I am sure you have been the very kindest master to me, Sir." There was no want of young gardeners. Stephen Meredith's brother Frank was about nineteen, and had been well trained at the Level Bit, and was delighted to see the world, and to come and live near his great relations, as he always called them; and Stephen was happy to shew them any kindness that laid in his power, for he loved his family; and though he said little of it, had been greatly disappointed not to get his dear Ellen a service; and as it was never explained to him, he had feared that Mr. Lascelles had some prejudice against him, and that his request had never been attended to; and was somewhat surprised when he inquired for Frank, and expressed a desire to receive him into his family. And as Michael was now settled, and had openly spoken of the affair to Stephen, these happy brothers understood each other, and every shade of caprice or unkindness was removed from the character of Mr. Lascelles. Frank was very different from Stephen, more enterprising, and though not unsteady, not so easily governed, something like Jem Brown, but he had never suffered as Jem had; therefore, when he came under the

guidance of old Andrew, the stiff Scot began to doubt whether he and the young Frank could remain long together. But good advice and firm resolves on the part of Stephen to send him home, if he gave the slightest trouble to the old gardener, made Frank consider his way. And one evening, when he had strolled down to see his brother and sister, with the baby on his shoulder, walking up and down the room, "You have no notion, sister, what a tiresome old man that Andrew is, so abominably obstinate, I believe he thinks—" and as he was going on, Stephen stopped him. "It is your place to obey him, Frank, and it is only upon those terms that you can keep your place. I would not have a brother of mine give trouble in Mr. Lascelles's family." "But when I know," said Frank, "that the way my father has taught me is the best way, is it not provoking that this old man will not allow me to know any thing, and is always calling me a boy." Here the good-humoured Fanny rose. "My dear Frank, it is so natural to call things what they are." Here the family party was increased by the entrance of James Brown; and Stephen appealed to him, to know if Andrew was really a tiresome old man. "He is slow, partial to his own way." "That

he is *indeed*," said Frank. " But he is an excellent gardener, and in all the time that I have lived with Mr. Lascelles, he has been very kind to me, and I have constantly found that experience qualified him to direct me, and I never found it difficult to obey." " Do you hear that, Frank?" said Stephen; and James looked round, as though he would have said, " Have *you* found it difficult?" Frank understood the appeal, and said, " Perhaps, Mr. Brown, you may be of a milder temper than I am;" and as soon as this escaped him he seemed sorry that he had said it, and went on. " I am sure I have done all I could to please him." Frank had given the babe to his sister, and was leaning over the back of Jem's chair, declaring that he was sure, he was certain he had done all he could; and James, who in days lang syne, would have been quite of Frank's mind, and would have thought it impossible to bear with an obstinate old man, turned round, and looking him full in the face, said, " My dear fellow, I have lived so long with Andrew, that I know him exactly; he will not yield to you, he will not think it proper, and I must say that every one who considers, will think him better qualified to govern than a young lad like you. You cannot,

Frank, speak to any one who better understands the pride of the heart than I do. I have had plenty of it here," said James, striking his hand upon his bosom; "and if Mr. Kemp were here, he could tell you so. Jem Brown was a wild slip; but in all the pride of my heart, when I got my own way to the uttermost, I was never so happy as when I conquered myself, and bowed my proud spirit to obedience. No, my dear lad, I know just what you feel: just entering on life, in all the vigour of youth, you think it is your turn to govern, and Andrews to retire. But while his master sees fit to retain him, and while he is capable of fulfilling the duties of his place, the struggle is vain; you must either give up or go. But oh," said this nice young man, "how glad I should be, Frank Meredith, if you could think as I do, without the sin, the sorrow, and the suffering that has brought me to think thus; I do so love your brother." "Thank you," said Fanny, "thank you, dear James." "And again thank you," said Stephen. "I do so love your brother, that I should be glad to see you reap the fruit without the trouble of digging and watering." "I do not think it would be good for much," said Stephen. "Now hear me, Frank; let Andrews

guide you, go on quietly the same way that I did, and if there is any thing you can now and then just recommend to him, gently and slowly, mind you, still with submission to his opinion, I think all may yet be well. You have never come to any open quarrel, I hope." "No, not that exactly, only he told me yesterday, that he had not lived there so many years, and come all the way from Scotland to be taught by a boy." "He was perfectly right, Frank," said Stephen, "you must obey." "Oh," said James, "I wish I could prevail upon you, my good fellow, to think of these words, 'Not only to the good and gentle, but to the unthankful and evil,' we are called to obey. How that text did strike me, the first time I read it with attention." "But I cannot consider him as my master, you see; Mr. Lascelles is my master, and I look upon him as my fellow-servant." "You are in a great error then," said Stephen, "and the sooner you recover yourself the better, unless you have a mind to go back to your father." This was spoken sharply, and dear Fanny, who was always the mediator, said, "No, no, I cannot part with brother Frank, I want him."

Oh, how powerful is the spirit of kindness and love! This haughty boy, whose

rebellious heart was preparing a pert answer to his displeased brother, melted at once, muttered out that he would do what he could, and the bond between him and Fanny remained firmer from that day. He had always loved dear sister Fanny, but the kindness now was doubly felt: it came at a moment when he wanted it; when Stephen, the brother to whom he had looked up, seemed willing to part, to send him away. It went hard with him, he took it unkind, and the ebullitions of his settling temper still uttered low murmurings of the unkindness. "But then, Fanny, dear sister Fanny, it was worth bearing for her."

Frank's high temper gave Stephen some anxious hours, but he did not begin to wish, like worldly people, that he had not troubled himself; but he consulted with Michael on the right way of guiding this headstrong boy. "I have always found," said Michael, "that resistance strengthens opposition, and that if you meet it with equal spirit, you injure your own temper without benefiting theirs." "I told him he could not keep his place," said Stephen; "I should not have said that, because that is the last inconvenience; I should endeavour to make him feel that it would make me unhappy, and would be

very painful to Fanny; and all this, you know, is strictly true. But if, my dear fellow, a better principle should be imparted, how easy would it then be to bear the weakness of declining life, or gather that information from his experience which Andrew is both able and willing to impart."

There was one class of small dependants on the Brow Farm whom Michael found it very difficult to manage, the crowkeepers: no sooner was his back turned, than their vigilance was over, and he frequently considered the best means of correcting this defect; and one day it occurred to him, that it was worth a little thought. Amongst children of this description employed by Michael, was Thomas Southby: he was to be in as soon as the day dawned, it was a very nice piece of wheat, and the birds were assailing it in all parts. The young watchman expected Michael; he was there clapping and hooting with the greatest vigilance; Michael was gone, he thought, and he was off to another part of the village. Throughout this day, himself and William at different periods visited this field; it was at a considerable distance from the house. This young culprit thought himself safe, and until noon never entered this place, when he was greatly surprised to find William doing that busi-

ness for which he was paid; and on Saturday, when his wages were settled, Michael sent for his father, and referring to a paper on which he had carefully noted down all the hours this boy had spent elsewhere, payed him correctly for that time and no more. At first this caused a great outcry, but when it was found that to those boys who were punctual in the field, and did their duty steadily, Mr. Kemp gave a penny a-day more and a new hat at the end of the season. It worked complete reformation.

The following year, he had a number of little crowkeepers, and Tom Southby among the rest, as watchful as the best of them. The best guide in every case is the scripture guide, and we constantly find reward offered for good conduct, and patience exercised even with the rebellious. There is no doubt that sinners will elude vigilance, and young sinners will sometimes baffle every attempt to reduce them to order; but while mild measures may be used they are certainly best; and though sometimes an example must be made for the terror of evil doers, and the praise of them that do well, yet I believe it is rarely found that patient enduring kindness is without its fruit. Michael found it so in his case, he never had occasion to dis-

miss a workman. Esther's influence over her poor women was as complete and full as Michael's, and if she had not as much decision as her husband, she was aware of this defect, and acted in such a manner as to conceal it—quiet perseverance in what she knew to be right. They employed very few women on the farm, at least in labour. Michael had his own ideas upon this subject, he greatly preferred performing all that could be done by men and boys; he thought it made the women masculine and careless in their family, and destroyed that feminine decency which he so loved to encourage. It is true, he had a few stone-pickers in the season, and some hay-makers, but these women were mostly in their cottages, seeing to their husbands' and children's clothes, and providing for the general comfort of the family; so that the children were well nursed, and there was an air of decency in their dwelling which cannot be preserved while the wearied wife shares the labour of the day with her stronger partner. The lyings-in were provided for, and it was a regular custom at the Brow to lend a parcel for a month, and at the end of that term, when they came to return it, to keep them to dinner, and to converse with them on the necessity of devoting

themselves anew to God, who had brought them through danger and distress, and to give them such hints as might be useful for the training of the little ones. Thus feeling they had a Friend who attended them, and had a concern for their welfare, they were brought up to look to one head, and if their mistress was ill, or if they had not seen master for a few days, there was a sort of anxiety, a tender apprehension, even among the merely moral, which proved that they were sensible of their advantages, and feared to lose them.

Madam Lascelles was as much honoured, but then she was so much above them; that they could not so freely make known all that passed to her as they could to Esther.

It was in the evening of a very fine day, that the mother of little Thomas Southby came up to return her bundle, and to offer her thanks. The poor creature sat down in the porch to rest; Esther saw the shadow of something pass the window, and partly expecting Fanny, opened the door to welcome her. "Oh, Phœbe Southby, is it you?" "Yes, madam; I beg your pardon for not coming in, but I was a little tired coming up the hill;" and Esther took the baby, who laid wrapt in sleep, unconscious of the fatigue he occasioned. Taking in the sleeping infant, and

laying it safely, she returned with a cordial for the mother; and observing that all about her wore the appearance of care and industry, she said, "How happy it is for you to have so kind a husband." "Madam, I am come to return you thanks for the nice caudle you sent me: I had it three times in the week, and I may justly say, I think it did Thomas as much good as me, for you know, madam, how poorly he was; I am sure we are bound to love you and pray for you, madam; and then the learning our children gets; why, dear me, there is my little maid, she can read and work," and she began to feel in her pocket for a cap the child had made. "The youngest Miss Lascelles gave me this muslin, and I thought I would cut it out, and see what Patty could do." "Well, this is very neat indeed, and deserves to be encouraged; send her to me to-morrow, neighbour."

It is by intimate inquiry into the minuter concerns that we bind our connexions to us; in great matters they expect to be attended to, but in smaller affairs the heart is won by seeing that you are interested; for whatever shades of difference Providence may have seen fit to make in society, still each have a tender concern and an intimate feeling of small kindnesses

shewn them in the progress of affairs in their own little circle. Thus, Esther's observance of Patty's work, and the wife's neat mending; Michael's notice of Thomas's tidy *pig-sty*, and his care to keep his windows tight, and the small bits of wood nailed upon his cottage door; all these things led them to suppose they were regarded and even beloved. Oh, the power of this kind treatment over the human bosom, all feel it—it operates delightfully, it acts and re-acts, none lose by exerting this sweet principle, it descends from heaven to man, it operates delightfully on fellow-mortals, and rises again in oblations and in praise to Him who gave the principle; 'God is love, and he who liveth in love liveth in him.'

How much do those lose who bluntly and roughly treat their fellow-creatures worse than the animals who labour for them. There was not a man upon Michael's farm who would not have risen at any hour to serve his master or mistress; for why? because he knew that that master or mistress had a concern for every creature round them; that, in imitation of their beloved Saviour, following on to know him: in all their afflictions he was afflicted, so that the common occasions of life, which in other situations were passed

by or overlooked, were here noted, observed, and shared.

There was one fixed principle in Michael's mind, never to evade taxation; for he thought, how was it possible for government to effect its measures if every puny housekeeper, who shares the privilege of peace and protection, was to be endeavouring thus to deprive government of its resources. No, he thought it was money well spent which procured every man the benefit of sitting safe under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree. This operated in every way: the sly smuggler who came with a little piece of lace, or the more open evasion of giving in fewer windows than were in your house, were equally avoided here. Every species of dishonesty or deception was looked upon as sin against God, and avoided. Esther had no desire of finery, she had been brought up in habits of prudence, and they were so natural to her, that she could never feel easy unless the principle of economy were enforced. Her example was most profitable in her household, they were ashamed to be finer than their mistress; and the dear little children, neither seeing nor hearing any thing of false taste, were contented with the plainest appearance. It was this minute attention to

trifles which gave Michael power of doing many kind actions; and Esther was extremely careful in house expenditure; there was a sentence frequently upon her lips, "Plenty, but no waste;"—in short, Thou God, seest me. And the dear children were taught to fear daintiness—"How many poor little creatures want what you have, Moss; and if you take care, Jemima, I should not wonder if you might give a new frock to little Judith; but you know your father works hard, love, and if we waste we can have nothing to give." Now some good folks will say, how was it possible that such babies as these could understand? But we will say of them, as it is said of the German, that they make playthings for the English children to break; so these preserved those halfpence to make up a little store for the poor, which other children spent in trash to gratify the palate; and we will venture to say, this kept them in better health, and they breathed an atmosphere of love and good will, and their little active powers were kept in play usefully and happily, so that they rarely suffered from that species of uneasiness called fretfulness; and they mixed with no children but their cousins, and were not tempted with forbidden dainties nor forbidden finery.

People are little aware how children are affected by association, or how soon they long for what they see, and it is unkind to tantalize them with a prospect of enjoyment which is to be forbidden. Their greatest delight was the infant school, there they saw beings even younger than themselves busy and happy in pursuit of knowledge; they saw also necessary and wholesome correction of those faults which in so large a circle must arise, and they saw it immediately effectual in restoring good order and obedience, and if there was any thing like resistance at home, Michael would say, "I think we shall send you to the infant school:" and much as they liked to visit, they never wished to be members. Moss's chief gratification was a visit to his grandmother, who had a large old Bible, and permitted him to amuse himself by turning over the pictures and tracing the history by reading that part which related to them, and by these means they became acquainted with all the historical parts; and it was as natural to Esther to refer for examples and warnings to the sacred book, as to some mothers to utter a worldly threat, or to offer a worldly enjoyment. If they concealed a fault, she would say, "O, Moss, 'the woman whom thou gavest

to be with me.'" If they were prevaricating, "Thy servant went no whither;" and immediately the idea of Gehazi, covered with leprosy, was present to the infant imagination. If they were not kind to each other, the love of Jonathan and David; if they were envious, they were reminded, "Behold, this dreamer cometh;" and in any act where generosity was required, the conduct of Abraham to Lot, "If thou wilt go to the right, I will go to the left;" and the conduct of David to Araunah, "in all these things did David give as a king giveth to a king;" and when they were to take offerings at the church, that text, "Shall I offer unto God that which cost me nothing;" so that some little self-denial was to be practised ere they consented to permit them the gratification of bestowing. If they were confident, they were reminded of Peter; if reluctant to forgive each other, they were reminded of that injunction of our Lord, "I say not unto you seven times, but until seventy times seven." If they looked pouting at the time of repose, it was, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath." If they were unwilling to impart their little gifts to each other, it was, "Remember, the Lord said, 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.'" If there was any thing communicated to the dis-

advantage of another, this broad axiom, "Speak not evil one of another," stopped them; and then, for the gentleness and all the beautiful graces that adorn the christian character, they were referred to the Saviour, "Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;" and then for obedience, even Jesus was subject to his parents. The Lord of life and glory, before whom nothing is pure, nothing is holy, came and dwelt among us, bore with our sins, our infirmities, and shall not we bear with one another?

Thus did these good parents train their little ones, and for moral precepts they went to the Proverbs, so abounding in wisdom. And for God's hatred of contempt for age, the awful instance of the children with Elijah made a strong impression—the bears out of the wood. Moss was a keen child; "But mother, there are no bears now in England." "But take care, Moss, how you harden your little heart. Remember Pharaoh: there are plenty of flies and frogs, besides, God says, "He that being often reproved, and hardeneth his neck shall be suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy." These children felt the force of these appeals, they understood them. It is impossible to ascertain how far the divine blessing might

rate upon the minds of children whose parents were walking in the fear of God, but this we can assure the reader, that neither Esther or Michael found the slightest difficulty in making their children understand all the precepts of the Scriptures, nor even the lessons which are drawn by inference, so that the common objection that they cannot understand appears to be the result of prejudice and inexperience. Not only did they comprehend what was told them, but they soon began to find out lessons for themselves. Thus, for instance: as they were walking hand in hand through the church-yard, Moss asked, turning his little head round to his father, "Whether that was not holy ground." "Yes," replied his father. What led the child to this question, was having overheard some one say, that the punishment was more severe for any abuse offered in the church-yard, because it was holy ground; and then said the little prattler, "Dada, should we not pull our shoes off as Moses did?" "There is no commandment of that sort, my dear; if God were to speak personally to us as he did to Moses, we might be commanded to act as Moses acted; he is every where—

'Not to one narrow partial spot confined.'

If you take the wings of the morning,

and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea, behold he is there." The children were silenced for the time; but it was very difficult to make them believe in the presence of God, because they could not see him, and this is the difficulty that most parents will find, and every unrenewed heart will feel. But one strong lesson they were enabled to give him very shortly after this: he was exceedingly fond of tasting, and his mother had often warned him not to do this. At length one day she had mixed a small portion of calomel in red currant jelly, and while she went up stairs, Moss seeing the nice jelly at the top, took it down without once perceiving the medicine: as might be expected, he was very ill in about the course of half an hour after, and Esther, who had no idea of where the medicine went, and thought that the maids might have washed it away with the other spoons, was at a loss at first to conjecture what could be the cause of the child's indisposition. "You must have eaten something that could not be good for you, my love, tell your mother what you have eaten. I hope you and Jemima have not got at the berries in the garden." "No, no, indeed." "What have you been tasting?" She had sent for his father from the field, and at this point of the question

he entered. " Now that is my own boy, try and remember what you have eaten." He was about to bring it out with some reluctance, when the truth flashed upon Esther, and she questioned him with no hesitation to confess it.

" Now, my dear boy," said Michael, " the great and good God who loves you, saw you, though we did not; he permitted you to take this, to convince you that he is about your path, about your bed, and spieth out all your ways." " And remember, my precious dear," said Esther, " whenever you are going to do any thing which you would not wish us to see, it must be wrong; and remember these four little words, ' Thou, God, seest me.'" But this led to something awful and affecting, for the child had an undefined terror of being alone: he thought God had permitted him to take the medicine which had made him so very ill, and he could not but consider him as an angry God. Michael consulted Mr. Lascelles upon this tender point, [illegible] him to speak sweetly and familiarly of God reconciled to sinners through Jesus Christ; — that dear friend, who is so full of compassion and tender mercy, inviting little children to come unto him. Michael did this, he took Moss on his knee one day when he was

looking at the picture of Peter walking on the water— "You see, my boy, Peter was afraid, and he began to sink; and what did he do, my little dear? why, he said, 'Lord save, or I perish.' Now you are afraid, Moss, of being alone; you think that the great and good God is angry with you. Now do you do what Peter did, cry to him, 'Lord save, or I perish;' he is full of compassion, he loves little children, and is nigh to all that call upon him." From this time they found it necessary to speak chiefly of the love and pity of God, of the tender mercy of the Saviour; to speak of him as full of compassion, to mark the flowers, the fruit, the pretty butterflies, and all the varied charms of nature; pointed to him the beauties of the clouds by day, the setting sun, the rising moon, all these wonders of the hand of God; and then turning to Genesis, "You see, my dear little boy, that if it had not been for sin, man would have walked in the garden, and talked with God; but as soon as he sinned, he was afraid, and hid himself, and God was no more seen openly, but by particular revelation, because he is a holy God, and he cannot behold iniquity."

Every word of this went straight to the heart of the little Moss, he understood it,

he felt it, he himself had been a culprit, he was afraid, and this lesson brought home to his young heart was increasingly useful to him, more especially when he could feel what his dear father was daily endeavouring to impress upon him, that though God hated sin, yet he loved the creatures of his hand, and was reconciled unto them through Christ Jesus.

It was some time before the dear child seemed fully to comprehend this, but one day, when his mother had been displeased with him, for going out without her permission, the baby lip curled, and he was prepared to try his power, when his mother, though gentle, was firm, and he made no progress. At length his young heart was subdued; and it was one feature in Esther's character that she always met her culprit with increased tenderness after any little cloud, and the endearment seemed more prized from the temporary privation. And as she sat at her work, stroking his young head, "You love your mother, Moss?" "Yes, dearly," was the warm-hearted reply; "and you love her more, Moss, now she forgives you." "Me do," and the little creature was full of endeavours to show that he did. When she wanted to teach him an impressive lesson, she would take him and seat him on a

table before her. "Now, my boy, your dear Saviour, who died for you and for us all, that he might bring you nigh to your good and gracious God, deserves all your love; do you love him, Moss?" "O yes, me do, me do." "And you love me better now, Moss, than you did when I was angry?" "Yes," and again "me do" was repeated, and he seemed to feel all the force of the appeal though so young, and it seemed the first dawn of light let into his infant mind on the subject of reconciled love. She then read him that beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son, and dwelt on the father going out to meet him when he was yet a great way off, putting the ring on his finger, and the best robe—a mark of honour peculiar in the country where this scene lay. The child was animated and delighted, and from this time he took more pleasure in this picture in his grandmamma's Bible than any other in the whole collection; and so strong was this early impression of reconciled love, that we may safely say it grew with his growth, and strengthened with his strength.

How much do those lose who never look into the Bible, but with the cold formality of reading a chapter, and closing the book as a duty done. These sweet appeals to the revealed will of God strengthen our

principles and nourish our best affections; and how desirable is it in a rising family that both the heads of the house should be agreed, not merely in training their children, but their servants: it produces harmony of plan and simplicity of principle, and I own that I have been surprised at the effect produced even where there did not appear to be a radical change in the character, a sort of awe upon the mind, in thus referring to a perfect standard. "I being in the way, the Lord met me," was the answer of Abraham's servant; and those who are thus found in the way of waiting for the blessing, depending firmly on his word and promise shall find that he withholds no good thing from those that walk uprightly.

There was one custom not uncommon in many parishes, a sort of feast day, some relic of celebration of the patron saint, and it required much firmness on the part of these young people to keep their servants from sharing in these festivities; and the more, because there they were to meet their relations, whom they could not see at another time. How to break through it, and not seem unkind, they knew not, they made it a matter of prayer for direction, and were the more determined to stand firm, because their indoor family being large, it involved

late hours and many other inconveniences.

As they were talking it over with Margaret, she said in her quick way, " Dears, could you not have a feast yourselves, for it is seven years since ye were married. And how many years is it, Mr. Kemp, since you came to the farm? Twelve, I think, the beginning of next month. Well, dears, do ye have a feast of your own, and if the weather holds fine, let them have a treat in the hay field. You see it will come just after the saint's day, and you can make it St. Michael if ye will." Michael started, " Oh no, oh no." However, they determined to give it thought, and to propose it; so that very evening, after family worship, Michael said, looking at them with peculiar kindness, " You all know I wish you happy." " O yes, master," and there was a general murmur of assent. " Would you do any thing to oblige me?" " That we would," was the general reply. " Well then, if I were to invite your friends to see you here, would you give up going to the feast?" There was a general look, as though he had touched something very near the heart; and Mary Medway, though she was a stranger, had been invited, and thought it a good thing, and did not like to resign it.

In short, there was a general murmur of hesitation like rising resistance, with the exception of William, Rose, and Betty Smith; it seemed as though none would be willing to give up this promised pleasure. "What can I do?" said Michael; "I should be sorry to part with you, but I have many objections against this meeting; while my servants were out-doors, I had no control over them on a Sunday, but now I seem answerable that the sabbath should not be profaned." "But we go to church," said one; "we go to church," said another. "But as soon as you come out there is drinking and smoking, laughing and talking; this ought not to be on a Sunday." He waited—they looked down, they knew its truth. "Well, I am very sorry for it; I see I shall lose many that I value, but if it must be, it must be, my mind is made up. I had hoped, that by seeing all your friends here, you might have been induced to oblige me, but we must part." There was not a heart there, however obdurate, but sunk at these words: they saw he was hurt, more hurt than angry, and they did not know well what to do; so as in all cases when they were at a loss, they went to Betty Smith, and she gave but one advice to all, "Humble yourself, my good maid, humble your-

self, my good man, it is the only way; you are not to expect master to change his mind, I know he will not, because he is in the right, and then he never gives up, I can tell you. If master had made a mistake, and found himself wrong, he would not mind owning himself in a fault, or begging your pardon either. Once, when he spoke to me about something he thought wrong, and I made it out to him clear that he was mistaken, he was quite grieved and ashamed, and humbled himself much more than any of you would do." It was a long struggle between the pride of the heart and the desire of keeping the place where they were all so happy. "How shall we speak to master? what shall we say?" Betty hesitated whether she should undertake to manage for them, or whether she should make them conquer their pride and speak for themselves; and she was following the example Michael had so long set, looking for some scripture rule to guide conduct: "But have compassion one of another." So she said, "I tell you what I will do for you; I will tell master, as it is a proof of your duty as you gives it up, because it's a pleasure you have been all used to. But now mind, if you can't make up your minds to be satisfied, I will have nothing to do with it." They looked upon each

other, and said they were satisfied, and William undertook to speak for the men, and Betty Smith for the women.

The weather proved propitious, and all the friends of the Brow Farm servants came up the day after the feast by particular invitation; they were entertained with hospitality, and even the little children handed about the seed cake with great good-humour and pleasantry. Some of the parents of the servants wondered what objection Mr. Kemp could have to their going out to see their friends, and why he should have them at home? Betty Smith, who heard the wonder, went among them, and said, "I will tell you, neighbours. My master has as great a dread of breaking God's commandments as breaking the laws of the land, and more; and do you think, neighbours, when ye are met together on a Sunday, and have not seen one another for a long time, do you think you speak much about the sermon you have heard, or the Scriptures ye have been reading?" No, they could not say they did. "You see master has given you a very handsome treat here." They owned he had, and he was very kind, "and your mistress is a sweet lady too; and the pretty little children, why, I think it must be a pleasure to live with them," said one; and before

night, they all agreed that Mr. Kemp was very kind, he was in the right on't, and that they had never spent a more contented day; and when they rose to go, Michael said, "that if they wished any of their children to walk forward with them, he had no objection, only to let them be back in time." So it was all settled, and the party set out gratefully and happily.

As they walked by the way, "I cannot think what it is that makes every one speak ill of your master and mistres; they rail about them, and call them ——" William was of the party. "Well, and what do they call them, neighbour?" "Why, saints, and that they could not speak without turning up their eyes." "Well, I have lived with master more than eleven years, and I have lived with him when he was a servant himself; and he was always good and kind, and as for his being a saint, I do not see any harm in that, though I do not suppose he would like it himself, because he is so very humble. But there was St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, and these were all good men. I should think so. But since I have taken to read the Bible, I have found out a secret, that it is from scorn that they call them saints, not from any respect. You see what an honour it would

be, if they meant to liken them to such good people as St. Paul and St. John, who were beloved by our dear Saviour, and who wrote such beautiful accounts of him, that one would not think that any man *could* be like them." "No, William, no more they could," said William's sister, "unless God's own Spirit made them so; and let us take care how we mock at *him, that's* serious work; our day is coming, and what says the Scripture? 'I will mock at their calamity, and I will laugh when their fear cometh.'" These conversations sunk upon the hearts of the little audience, and the peace of the house remained undisturbed. They submitted to all Michael's regulations, gave up Sunday's feast, and felt the comfort of keeping within the limits appointed by God.

I know not why it should be, but so it certainly is, that when the mind is once brought in subjection, and the conduct regulated, the very persons who were most disposed to do wrong, are the most severe upon other culprits. They seemed to have forgotten that they were themselves liable to the same error; I could account for it upon religious principles, and could clearly perceive that none but those out of whose eyes the beam were taken could see clearly to pull out the mote; but it seems as though

memory failed in this instance, that those who so lately joined the giddy party, and wished to share the pleasures of the sabbath-breaking, should now be loud in their censure of others. But we may best give this in a short dialogue.

It was after the second annual meeting at the Brow, that Rose and Ann Medway were assisting to do some needle-work with Betty Smith, Ann exclaimed, "Well, what a pleasant meeting we had." "Yes," said Rose, "and no stain upon the conscience." "That's what I think," said Ann, "is the comfort of it. How can people enjoy themselves when they be breaking God's commandments, as master says?" A slight tinge passed over the brow of Betty Smith, and her cheek was suffused. "Why, dears," said Betty, "you see they do not think, that's it." "But they ought to think," said Ann Medway. "O dear me," said Betty Smith, "how soon people do forget." "Forget what?" said Ann. Rose began to guess what Betty meant, and was silent; but Ann went on. "For my part, I wonder how they can be happy." "Ask Ann Medway that question," said Betty Smith; "ask her how she could be happy this time two years." "Me, Mrs. Smith, why, I never went." "That is true; but who

would have gone if their master would have let them?" "Why yes, I know that, but I had never been there; I thought it was something mighty pleasant, but how could I tell Mrs. Smith?" "Well now, my girl," said Betty, "do you turn to Matthew, xviii. 28. You are just in the same spirit with this poor man; you see, though he had got the money and been forgiven, yet how hard he was upon his fellow. Now you, Ann, who wanted to go, and you, Rose, who would have liked to have gone. You see you are blaming, and condemning, and forgetting the sins of your own hearts." They both cast their eyes down, for they felt the truth of what Betty was saying. "And what should we do, Mrs. Smith?" said Ann. "Why, dears, ye should walk humbly, and ye should remember what ye were yourselves, and have pity upon others."

It was far more difficult to convince Ann than Rose, such is the advantage of early association with good people, however slight. I can only compare it with the effect which dwelling near the Jews had upon the neighbouring nations: they gained the knowledge of God and his laws almost intuitively, and there is an outward decency of conduct which such knowledge generates, and which otherwise

they would never have attained to. Thus, for instance, the infidel who acts in the light of revelation, while he denies that light, and ascribes that to nature which unassisted nature could never attain. To take a view of all the islands we have visited in their original state; you will find them worshipping idols, eating human victims, and delighting in the most cruel reprisals in war. These are the fruits of poor unassisted natural reason; we need but read the Missionary Register, and see what is doing in the four quarters of the globe, to bear testimony to the truth of my observation. Absurd, superstitious, idolatrous cruelty, are found every where, till the light of revelation dawns. Ask the poor widow of the Hindoo wherefore she devotes herself to a cruel and untimely death? She would reply, "That some hope of dwelling in an ideal state of happiness with her departed husband leads to this rash desperation." Ask the fifty courtiers, who, following the light of a wild superstition, immolate themselves upon the grave of their king; they will tell you, that some fanatical expectations in attending their deceased master in his new state of being has wrought them to this frenzy. But not to multiply instances, human nature left to itself is full of the

wildest absurdity, and natural religion exhibits only the insane vagaries of disordered imagination. He who made the heart, who knows what is in the heart, can alone regulate and bring it back to him from whom it hath strayed. Oh, the mighty mischief wrought by man's disobedience, when he chooses not to retain God in his thoughts, given up to believe a lie, working all uncleanness with greediness, plunging deeper at every step in the awful ruin, till even the increase of the multitude strengthens the fatal determination to do evil. How common is the infatuated observation, "I do no more than others." Little do these sad votaries of eternal ruin think how companionship in misery will aggravate their misery. Sinner, stop, ere the descent be too mighty for thee; it is truly said, that the first steps are the most important. It is vain to suppose we can pause in our midway course; no, the impetus is then too strong, and down they rush without power, I had almost said, without inclination to stop.

Jem's little ground was now in forwardness, he rose early and worked late; and Peggy's dear friend, the kind Mr. Brownrigg, was indefatigable in his attendance on masons and carpenters. This good man had very correct ideas of any good he

was about to perform. Thus, for instance: "I am not going to build you a drawing-room, Mrs. Peggy, the room you will inhabit will serve for kitchen, parlour, and all;" but it was an ample kitchen: "and by and bye," said her kind master, "when we shall see Brown and Co. gilt and emblazoned with many a flourish, when young apprentices pour in their hundreds upon you for board and instruction in the art of slipping and grafting, then my good Mr. James may build you a smart parlour if he pleases." So the new house consisted of one large airy kitchen, with a washhouse on the one side, and on the other a pantry, in which to lodge every comfort of life; a most excellent cellar, two good sleeping rooms with attics over them: and as for the green-house, forcing-house, &c. it was very complete; and as this good man considered before he acted, he laid out his money in a spot where it might reasonably be supposed it would return him interest; that is, at that extremity of the parish where other parishes bounded, and might reasonably be expected to come for those articles which James had to dispose of: it was equi-distant from three towns, and within a mile of the village church. Neatness pervaded every part, all was new and all was pretty, except the

garden — that was young, and a young garden is never pretty. And the bridal day came, and the young couple invited all that were dear to them on both sides; and their kind patron opened his cottage, and procured an excellent dinner, which was served up cold: he was an orderly man, and any thing like bustle destroyed his happiness; and he was determined, though parting with Peggy, to smile through the day.

Perhaps it might be as well to give the reader some account of his parting advice.

It was in the evening of the day before, with a voice almost tremulous, that he said, "Child, step into the parlour," and sitting down in his ample chair, and leaning upon a small table that stood before him, "As you have no natural relations, child, to counsel and protect you, I feel every way responsible, and I shall not consider my duty towards you fulfilled without a parting word." Peggy took up her apron, and began to wipe her eyes; and Brownrigg, with his natural drollery, which even at this moment could not be conquered, threw his handkerchief at her, and desired she would not misapply things but put all things to their right use. The good girl smiled through

her tears, took the handkerchief, and bent her attention while Brownrigg proceeded. "I hope, I think, nay more, I really believe this young man will do all in his power to make you happy, and I am sure, Peggy, you will make him an excellent wife. Though I am a bachelor, I think myself qualified to give you some counsel; it is an old saying, 'that those who stand by see more of the game than those who play;' and if it is so, I am in this sense qualified. Now, child, women are very apt to be troublesome in trifles, and as trifles make up the sum of human life, and as they occur every day, they are very often troublesome. Thus I have seen a man almost worried to death, because he did not rub his shoes; and as we have all some foolish tricks or petty habits, which it is almost too late to think of correcting when we come to man's estate, these are things women must bear with, and if a wife is determined that a man shall not turn his cushion before he sits down in his chair, or scratch his head when he is thinking, or do any foolish trick he has been in the habit of doing when he was a bachelor; I say, if a man is to be tortured like a child, he will grow weary, and perhaps angry, and thus many a fool-

ish female has thrown away her diamonds, and picked up buttons." All this while he sat with the fore-finger of his right-hand pointing to the palm of his left. "Now observe, child, do not, when your husband makes a litter in the room, which perhaps he may, for all men are not like your old bachelor master, do not, I say, make a parade of putting every thing in order, and run about with a duster in your hand as though you would say, 'See what trouble you give me.' No, do all quietly and humbly. One thing by the way, child; remember we are the lords of the creation, and it is your part to obey; and if we do let you govern sometimes 'tis a foolish mistake we make; so I say, Peggy, child, do you keep in your place. Ah, that is a good thought; I have seen men blowing the fire, there is nothing a man dislikes like a bad fire and dirty hearth. Now you see, child, when a man comes in from his business, he expects to be petted and made comfortable. Oh, there is another thing—but I must finish what I was saying about fires: mind to manage your fire well, you will be particularly well off in this respect, you may have all round coals; but observe me, be sure to let your fireside be very comfortable; the whole com-

fort of your room depends upon it. Now mind me, child, find out all his peculiarities; observe them, attend to them. Mind, I don't mean, if he does any thing wrong, that you should encourage that; no, I am talking of trifles, child, immaterial things;" and he lengthened out the word. "Observe, always to have your dinner ready at the time—perhaps he may not be in time, that is not your fault; do you be ready, and mind to let him have always a clean table-cloth, Peggy, there are many contrivances for keeping it clean; and be sure you never let him find you dirty or negligent. Oh, apropos of that, some girls, some very smart girls, do think when they are married that there is an end of the business, that they have no reason to be smart any longer. Why, child, that is the very time to begin; it is far more difficult to keep us than to win us; be sure, you are always very neat, very clean, and mind one thing, very good-tempered. Never meet him with a frown on your brow on any consideration; a man goes out and calls on his neighbour, sees a neat wife and some smart daughters, comes home to his own *dowdy*. Why, you see he must make comparisons, and pity himself perhaps, poor fellow! No, you be advised, my nice child,

and if there are any comparisons to be made, let them be all to your own advantage. Mind me, now I don't expect you to be perfect, Peggy, and if you fail in any instance, observe always to be the first to notice it, and say, you are sorry; and if by chance *he* should notice it, never defend it, for it is that which provokes a man. You see it is adding one fault to another, it is what no man can bear, it is not to be supposed they can. By the way, it is no use talking about children before they are born, but if ever it should please God to give you any, mind and look at Fanny Meredith, she manages her children remarkably well, and they are not easy to manage, for they have a great deal of spirit in them: the boy's a prince, he seems born to command, and he *has had* a royal will. Now she does not contradict them every moment, and chide them, and scold them, but if they want any thing which they are not to have, she settles the business directly, takes the thing from them, and looks at them firmly but kindly. Now though she only keeps a girl, and has plenty of work besides, I never was disturbed by the squalling of her brats, though I have had many a comfortable dish of tea there. No, the thing is understood, she governs them, not they her; and now,

Peggy, you may wonder that I have said nothing to you upon the subject of religion, child, but—" and he looked up solemnly—" I am sorry to say it is a subject I have so lately understood, that I feel as though it would be presumption in me; but my dear good Peggy, if to own that I regret I have not sooner turned my thoughts to this most delightful, most important subject; if to own, that when I ought to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, I am blind, and see men as trees walking; if to own this to you, Margaret Macdonald, would be of any use to you, whilst I do it with sorrow of heart—" " Oh, my dear master," said Peggy, " you have been so kind, so good, you could not have been kinder, you could not have been better, if you had been my own father; and now, sir, I do hope that Kitty will make you a very good servant: she is very handy, and she knows your ways now, but if you should be ill, if ever you have one of your violent headaches, my dear master, I could not be happy that you should have any body to attend you but myself, because I know what to do. Now, promise me never to do without me, if you want me." " No, child, I cannot make such a promise, I shall want you every day, my good Peggy. I do not expect ever to sup-

ply your place. You know I am an odd old fellow, and like nothing new, not even a new shoe-horn." "Oh sir, I hope you will be happy; I am sure, if you are not, I cannot be—it would grieve me sadly to see you put out of your way, and made uncomfortable."

Just at this point of the question, Rose Meredith called in to see her friend, and neither Brownrigg nor Peggy could quite recover themselves so as to appear with their usual composure. "Is any thing the matter, Peggy?" said Rose, with a voice of sympathy. "Nothing at all, child, only we are both blockheads together, both want a whipping." When Rose understood the state of the case, she said, "I wish, sir, you would have me, I am sure my mistress would spare me, if you liked to have me." It was a thought Brownrigg had often had, but he could not bear to deprive Esther of a good servant to accommodate himself. Rose was so prepossessed with this idea, that she slipped out, and went to the Brow immediately; and while she was gone, Brownrigg said, "Oh, Peggy, there was a thought, I had one thing more I meant to speak to you about; I had nearly forgotten it till you talked about my being ill, and that made me remember it. You see,

child, some women are very fond of being pitied, and they never have the least complaint, but they are sure to cry out and make a very great fuss about it. Now, though a man may pity you a little, and go on perhaps two or three years, being sorry and sorry, yet it is not in human nature to like it always, no creature can love an hospital; no, child, 'tis impossible to avoid being tired of saying, 'Poor dear,' all day long: I never hear a man say it, but I doubt not he must think, that when a door keeps creak, creak, he could almost wish it shut." Peggy hardly understood her master; he saw she did not, and he explained. "You see, child, if I had such a wife threatening me every day to go, I should be apt to think she had better be gone at once." Peggy shook her head incredulously. Of all the qualities for which Brownrigg was eminent, his kindness in illness was most so: he never appeared wearied of remedies. When Peggy had the tooth-ache, he was always bringing her some new nostrum. "I think this would do you good; and why wont you try that? and did I not bid you not to sit in your wet shoes?" and he would follow her about with the most provoking kindness. "No, child, you may talk as you will about tenderness and feel-

ing, and pity and cruelty, but I would rather live in an hospital than with a grumbling wife; a man is not to be expected to be always petting his patients, but with such a near relation as a wife he is expected to be full of kindness; and so he might be for a short season and for a long season: but for life, child, think of that; I tell you, it is not in nature." Brownrigg grew so eager, that Peggy could not help laughing, saying, "she thanked God she was very well." "Well, take care of yourself, and keep so; and whenever you begin to grumble, think of your poor old master, and don't go on any longer."

Rose returned, but not alone, for her mistress came with her. "O my beloved uncle! it is the very thing I have thought of before, I do think she will suit you exactly." The two girls had gone to the kitchen—"But how do you know the girl would like it? there is no one to gossip with, it is a very different place from your house, Esther, I am getting older and older, more and more particular." "Oh, no, uncle, you are every day more dear and more delightful, kinder and better;" she took his hand and kissed it, and they wept together, and the business was done; and the very day after the marri-

age Rose was settled with Brownrigg, and Kitty went to the Brow.

Michael Meredith, who was always a favourite with Brownrigg, and a frequent visiter at his cottage, was now doubly welcome, as his aunt was established there; and his old friend, who was anxious to have him with James, was often found inquiring how the Latin went on, and regretting he had not made some acquisition of the sort in his youth. "For you see, my dear boy, I was at an excellent school in the Borough, the Borough of Southwark, a fine extensive place, my dear. We had a great many fine scholars, as I have been told: I wish you had been there, my little Michael, they would have made something of such a boy as you. I was upon the foundation, my dear, had always a taste for enterprize, and was beloved by all my schoolfellows; but this is a great mistake which children make to laugh at the studious. There was one fellow whom we used to call the taper, because he was long and thin, and would study by a little candle at one corner of the school-room in a winter evening. And mind, Michael, this very boy whom we used to laugh at, is become lord mayor of London, and makes such fine speeches to the common council,

and went up with the address to the king; and the king said to some one who stood by, he was very glad that his good city of London had got such an eloquent leader. Now, my boy, such a word as that from his sovereign warms a man—it encourages him, you see, and I was glad our good king should make such a sensible observation; it becomes the crown to encourage learning."

Michael used to listen to these observations of his friend with the most profound respect; he had often heard stories of the Mansion House and Guildhall, but had very little notion of their magnitude; and when Brownrigg told him that it was four times the size of the church, he could not contain his astonishment — his youthful imagination was fired, and we may venture to say the grandeur of the Mansion House was sometimes an indefinable motive for exertion. Brownrigg's former residence in London had given him evident superiority in the eyes of the village; and when Mr. Ferguson first settled, the only person beyond the Rectory whom he could visit, as he thought, was the cottage of the retired tobacconist: there he was always amused by original communication, and welcomed with unreserved good-humour and hospitality; had a warm seat by the

side of his fire, and sometimes read the newspaper.

We must own, there was something of regret when he read there of his juniors rising into notice and command, while he was just getting the bread for the day in a distant part of his native country. But this good man was an acquisition; for though Brownrigg was a kind neighbour, and very chatty, he had not been brought up as an agriculturist, and found it difficult to keep up that sort of conversation with which the village abounded; and while Ferguson supplied this want, Brownrigg was an active and kind friend, assisting, and overlooking every little alteration in his new residence, and supplying that knowledge of mankind in which Ferguson was eminently deficient. Oh, my dear reader, if we were all to extend an arm, where it is wanted; to supply each other's deficiencies, we should not only bestow, but receive comfort. The selfish being, shut up in his own narrow circle, knows little of the pleasure to be enjoyed in this sweet interchange of mutual good offices. As it is sometimes seen that the most unexpected success attends the most unpromising characters, so at this moment the whole family of the Kemp's were surprised by the marriage of Joe to his master's daugh-

ter: she was a smart girl, but not very discriminating, it may be supposed; Joe had known her many years, and he went on so long, so quietly and so steadily, that the father made no objection; and while his own family were wondering and astonished, the father of the young person was rather pleased than otherwise to have her settled in a house where respectability had so long distinguished them; Joe might really be said to owe this happiness to his connexions, the care they took to keep him from improper society, the influence of his father over his weak mind, the neatness of his mother in his personal appearance.—Reader, it is no small blessing to be respectably connected, and those who link themselves with honourable persons are far happier than those who look for wealth.

This young creature was really pitied by the Kemp family, who thought she was deceived; and so conscientious was old Joseph, that had not the affair gone so far he would have spoken to his master. Now some little reader will exclaim, "What, injure his own son?" "Yes, my dear young friend, Joseph Kemp was under that law. 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them.'" But he had no reason to

regret his forbearance, for a gracious Providence so ordered it that Joseph behaved very well, and all his habits under his father having the force of law, he did nothing wrong, had no temptation to wander, no genius to betray, and we are happy to say that his little wife, though not highly gifted, felt her power, and used it without abusing it. James Finch, in his frequent visits to the Brow, gained much under the ministry of Mr. Lascelles, and was in the habit of occasional calls at all the houses, not excepting the cottage of Margaret Beal, whose light burnt clearer and brighter as she advanced nearer to her heavenly home, and how this old Christian rejoiced in seeing the young ones around her rising in life and usefulness, can only be conceived by the Christian mind. She would say to herself sometimes, " Yes, I see it, the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters do cover the sea; it will be—I shall not live to see it; but no matter, I shall be in——;" and she lengthened out the words, " Where there is fulness of joy and pleasures at thy right-hand for evermore."

In the pastoral visits of Mr. Lascelles he was wont to say, " To some houses I go as a learner, to others as a teacher. At the cottage of Margaret Beal, Mentoria,

I never call but I seem as if I had brightened my armour; and when I return to my own dwelling, where blessings are scattered in profusion about me, I am ready to say, ' How many things are here which a Christian does not want.'" "My love," said Mrs. Lascelles, "I hope you do not think I desire any thing beyond what is right?" "I hope not, I am sure," and she hesitated. "Far from it, my love; I only say, that when I visit the cottages of my poor neighbours—poor in this world, yet rich in faith and heirs of eternal life, I can only say, ' How does our good God make up with the smile of his countenance for the want of all that a vain world deems necessary.' And when I sit down and look around me, and see one little improvement, and say, ' It is pretty,' and improve another, I look upon it as in Scripture language, ' cisterns that will hold no water.' Nothing can satisfy the christian mind but thy presence; all besides is too mean, too poor for an immortal soul."

At these occasional conversations his dear children were present; the elder Miss Lascelles was of a silent character, peculiarly prone to reflect upon and digest conversation, even when she appeared not to listen to it, and would often retire into the silence of her own apartment, and

carefully note down her father's conversation and her mother's reply, thus laying up a treasure for those days when all that delighted them should be silent in the dust. Not that the dear child thought thus, for she could not have penned a word under such an impression. These dear parents frequently trembled as they looked upon their rising offspring, and Mrs. Lascelles would say, " O, my love, I can enter into the feelings of poor Rebecca, when she says, ' Should Jacob take a wife of the daughters of the land, what good would my life do me;' and I cannot help thinking sometimes, if my dear children were to form worldly connexions, my life would indeed become wearisome." It was just after a conversation of this sort that Edmund Walker came on a visit, bringing tidings of his father and his mother, and kind greeting; and Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles exchanged a look which both understood, but neither explained. It said thus much, " If such a thing were proposed, I should not object, should you?" The thought had passed Edmund's mind, and he came with an observing eye on both the young ladies: he saw the elder, the very transcript of her mother, like her in person, only in the bloom of health and youth, and still more like her in mind, moving so very

quietly, that you would suppose she did nothing, yet so punctually and orderly, that she accomplished far more than a bustling character could perform; she was a listener of the intelligent kind, her eye shewed an interest in all that passed. There was a look of breathless intelligence about her when the conversation was interesting, as if she feared to lose a word; and when she spoke, it was so to the point, so calm and judicious, that the little Maria would often call her Mamma playfully, intimating that she was as sententious and grave as became the maternal character; while Miss Lascelles would softly stroke her cheek, and only say, "Fairy, whither next?"

Nothing more severe passed between these devoted sisters, whose contrast of character rather increased than diminished the general happiness. How they were beloved by both parents may be conceived better than described; they saw them carefully pursuing all that pointed to peace and blessedness, avoiding the broad road with fear and trembling, and the line over which they passed from the fallen state to the renewed inward purity was scarcely perceptible; yet the mother, who daily watched with anxious hope for the divine impress, thought she saw somewhat more than poor unassisted nature could produce

in each of their treasures. And how this hope and this perception cheered the heart of each parent is more easily felt than described; for what is all this world can bestow, how poor, how unsatisfactory; at that hour when this mortal must be laid down in the grave; and indeed at no moment can it be said to satisfy a mind of any compass; no, there is a craving desire, a longing after immortality. Edmund Walker saw and admired both the young ladies, and at one moment really hesitated which he should prefer. At length the age of the elder, her steadiness, and many fascinating qualities, determined him, though it may truly be said he could have liked either, had either stood single. It is not my intention to enter at any length on this subject, but we thought the reader would feel an interest in young persons whom he had known so long;—and how different is the manner in which a modest Christian girl receives a declaration of preference to that in which vain worldly-minded young persons look for admiration: the one is calm, and self-possessed, and tranquil; the other full of flutter and restlessness, exalted by mortal preference, seems almost to forget that she is mortal; and we are pleased to say, that during the period of probation these well-trained young

persons forgot no friend, no dependant, but filled with an anxious desire to perform every duty of their little day, they travelled calmly, rationally, and peacefully through that period which is but too commonly marked as a period of selfishness. Dear Mr. Walker's eye flashed delight, when he heard of his son's proposal and his son's acceptance; and indeed we may say, that the families on both sides were equally pleased; and as for Sophy Walker, to whom her brother was inestimably dear, her eyes overflowed with delight, as she said, "Oh Edmund, Matilda Lascelles is the very girl for you." But happiness is not the lot of mortal beings, at least happiness unmixed; for just at this period, when all that was earthly combined to please them, and the smile of heaven was upon them, the disorder of dear Mr. Walker became decidedly worse; hope could no longer flatter those who loved him. His departure was at hand, and the saint was about to enter the presence of his Saviour. His disease became acute, and at first bore hard on the distressed body. It was greatly to be feared, though no doubt could remain to those around him that he was a happy blessed spirit, still it was feared that the clay tenement would press upon the immortal inhabitant, so as to deaden the power of expressing its

hopes. His weeping partner was bowing submissively to the will of God, when this unhoped for gratification, the delight of seeing him depart joyfully was nearly resigned. At this very moment the utmost wishes of her heart were granted, and he spoke of things immortal as one whose lip had been touched by a coal from off the altar.

It is not for me, reader, to attempt to do justice to the expression of that blessedness which a saint on the confines of glory is sometimes permitted to describe, but a few faint recollections I will attempt. It was after a paroxysm of severe pain, when the exquisite relief of ease gives a sense of delight which no one but those who have suffered acutely can conceive; it was at a moment like this that our sainted friend exclaimed, "O, what an awful declaration is this! 'I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh.' O heavenly Father, I thank thee, this is not my case. Oh, Sophia, you who have seen me in all my weakness, you who have known me in a state of doubt and trembling; hearken, my beloved, my precious partner; come near while I tell you what he has done for my soul. I have the most perfect sense of security; "I know in whom I have believed; and I also know that he is not only able,

but willing to keep that which I have committed unto him." Oh my love! what a moment is this; I stand upon the threshold of eternity, and now, while the enemy would harass, perplex, and bewilder me, he is not permitted; but my foundation is secure, I am borne up by divine love and pity, and I *can say* my beloved is mine, and I am his. Oh, praise him, praise him for me; had I ten thousand tongues, it is all too little to speak the joy of the redeemed soul.—Sophia, words are too lightly treated in this world of ours, we do not weigh them sufficiently. Mark, my beloved, every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account of. Now observe me, my love; as I am leaving this land of shadows, and entering upon immortal security, where all is substance and reality, every promise of my blessed Saviour, every precept he hath uttered, seems engraved with tenfold certainty upon my mind—all rises with vital importance, all bears upon the grand question, Is my soul safe?" And here the dear old Christian smiled. "I can say it is. Oh the blessedness of eternal certainty!—Sophia, I cannot speak it, but I feel it—here, my love;" and he pressed his hand upon his bosom. "Jesus loveth me with an everlasting love, and I shall see him, be with him, to behold his glory."

Just then his son entered: "My darling boy, think not that I am incapable of entering into your prospects; think not that I look upon them with an indifferent eye; far from it, I regard this connexion as the answer to my prayers, I regard it as one link in the chain that leads to your eternal happiness. Never, at no one period of my life, did the importance of earthly connexions appear with so much weight as at this moment. I enter into all your joys, my dear, but I have seen the sun in his brightness, and my dazzled eye beholds mortal affairs in dim confusion; and yet, my dear dutiful child, I do view this projected step in your life as most important. I would fain lay my withering hand on the young head of thy future partner, but he who hath seen fit to deny me this can supply this temporal hindrance;" and his brilliant eye was cast upward. "In that land of light and love to which I go, Edmund, distance shall be done away, and time shall be no longer." Mrs. Walker drew near his couch, "Would you wish, my love, to see Matilda? our betrothed child is here, she shares in Edmund's sorrow, she longs to bend her knee by your side." Mr. Walker replied, with the tear in his eye, "Dear christian girl, I rejoice for thy sake, Edmund." And

now, with a firm, composed, and pensive step, leaning on the arm of Mrs. Protheroe Walker, Matilda entered. For a moment or two there was silence, all seemed to feel too much to be able to speak; Matilda, bending her knee beside him, said, "Dear sir, I am so happy you permit me to see you." "It is a moment of some importance, my dear, this last battle of an old soldier; 'but I am more than conqueror through him that loved me.' Yes, my promised daughter, I rejoice that I speak to one who can understand; I rejoice that my son hath followed the resolve of good old Bishop Beveridge, and chosen one for his bride who hath first chosen Christ. Perhaps you have heard of my conflicts, it seemed as though the enemy would not let me pass to my everlasting rest, but by stout resistance." But smiling, he continued, "There are more with us than there are against us; 'I am more than conqueror through him that hath loved me.' Observe that, my dear; I feel now that I know something of what Paul meant, that love of Christ which passeth knowledge. We speak these words, but none can know or feel their full import, their peculiar blessedness, till they are brought to an hour like this; till now, I never knew, I never felt, the exceeding riches of the love of

Christ. Oh, what it is! oh, what it is to pass from death unto life, from hope to certainty:" and the smile of peace was upon his countenance as he spoke it, and he was no more. All present stood in breathless distress; his bereaved wife looked upon her children, and pressing her hand upon her forehead, in the keen agony of mental suffering, bent her knee. Every one present knelt also, but no word was uttered, no sound heard—it was the stillness of eternal repose, and they seemed in the state of the prophet Elisha; their master was taken from their head. But Sophia Walker began to fear for her dear mother; when she glanced her eye upon her, she saw the fixed look: she rose, and with determined, cool, yet imperative resolution, she withdrew her from the room.

When the shutters of the Rectory were closed, and the deep bell pressed upon the ear, scarce a heart in that village was unmoved. In his own family there was such a blank, that every being there seemed ready to exclaim, "And I, whither shall I go!" The event was differently felt at home: it was the loss of a cherished object, or one who was continually ready to make known the will of God concerning them. Were they sick, he was their counsellor and their friend; were they un-

happy, he soothed them; did they rejoice, he shared their joy; and they were all personally inquiring who should supply that blank, and make up to them the loss they were now sustaining. Perhaps nothing shows the selfishness of the heart more clearly than sorrow; let any one faithfully examine wherefore they grieve, and they will find themselves continually going back to a personal point. In the removal of a saint like this, if we feel aright, there is nothing but rejoicing: "He hath fought the good fight, he hath finished his course, and there is laid up for him a crown of rejoicing." This is all a clear matter of thankfulness, no regret blends, and yet how deeply does such a loss penetrate the human heart.

But as I before said, some felt this removal with unmixed sorrow; with others, it was sorrow blended with regret. With the irreligious farmer, who grudged no expense to dress his daughters, or gratify his palate, but who thought every shilling spent for God and his minister a sad privation; to these persons the tears were soiled by the recollection of how many unkind words, how many ill-natured reflections had been cast upon this pious, harmless man of God. Even Mrs. Potter was constrained to say, "Well, there be some

as would be less missed than the Reverend, that I will say: he was not a bad man, take him all together, he was rather too over-righteous, that was my fault against him." At the turnpike-house, where we have noted a conversation before, inquiries were made by the old man, as the servants hurried backwards and forwards, and as the physician's carriage stopped to pay. Even here the interest was manifested, and the concern expressed, but here also human nature appeared. "Well, I always said he was a good man, did I not?" "Yes, you did; and you said what was true."

But we turn to the sincere mourner, to those cottages where the truth had been received in simplicity; we will look at Mary Kemp and her weeping husband; and as Joe's good-natured wife strove to comfort, she said, "I know it is wrong, Phillis; I feel sure that the dear Reverend is in glory. O yes, I know that." And as Joseph Kemp sat by the window, turning the leaves of his old Bible, "I am thinking, Mary, as I should like to send down for our Michael." "'Tis a melancholy journey for him, my dear, and I do not see what good it will do." "No, but then he can do as he likes; he may be grieved, perhaps if we do not let him

know." "Shall I go, father," said Joseph "Yes, I wish you would, Joe." "I could borrow my father's tax-cart, and take Phillis." And then going in his father's tax-cart was almost as good as Michael going in his uncle's gig. But Joe had sense enough to keep this to himself, so he and his wife set off to the Brow, not at all like the bearers of such ill tidings. They were received with the greatest kindness, and Joe was highly delighted to exhibit his wife the following Sunday at church. An universal bow went round among the light and trifling, and even the steady admired his choice, and could not help congratulating him. It was an advantage for this poor young man, much to be coveted; surrounded by the support of different relatives, his mind, as the reader well knows, was of that weak fluctuating kind which had no steady rule of action. Brownrigg was among those who sincerely rejoiced at his settlement, and wished him well from his heart, received him with particular kindness, and could not help glancing at his former attachment to Miss Louisa. Joe had an undefined idea of propriety in preserving silence on this subject, and Phillis seemed quite at a loss to understand Brownrigg's allusion; she had an idea that he was a very merry gentle-

man, and mighty agreeable. She thought nothing farther on the subject, and indeed was so happy at the Brow, and had so many resources for filling up the short time that remained; that no inquiry was made, and all went on smoothly and pleasantly.

Michael determined to go and attend the funeral of his early friend; Esther was to accompany him, but could not leave her home; while Joe and Phillis remained. Michael set out late on the Monday, and did not reach P— till Tuesday afternoon. The funeral took place on Wednesday morning, the church was crowded to excess. At first, the Walker family meant to attend, but they found their spirits unequal to this exertion; so the only person present was Mr. Edmund, and his cousin Protheroe. But Mr. Lascelles arrived early on Wednesday morning: he was not equal to reading the prayers or performing the ceremony—he was a silent mournful spectator, lost in contemplation of that hour when himself should be called to give an account of his own important embassy. He viewed this in the most pleasing light; he well knew that his Master was not a hard Master, gathering where he had not strewed, but one who was touched with the feeling of infirmity, and was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

After the mournful service, on his return to the Rectory he stayed a few days with the bereaved family, and proposed taking Matilda home with him. This dear young creature strolled silently about, comforting one and another, and performing all the little offices of friendship in that silent manner which is sure to win the heart, and the request was universal, that she might remain a short time with them. The father and the daughter were equally desirous of living under the influence of that fine code of laws which are found in the 12th of the Romans ; and, among the rest, of weeping with those that weep, and rejoicing with those that do rejoice. Poor Michael lingered, and longed to see his friends at the Rectory, yet did not dare propose it, so much did he dread distressing those who were already bowed down under the hand of affliction ; but he thought he would take a last look on the spot where the mortal remains were deposited before he returned home. It was on this mournful visit to the narrow house of his early friend, that he saw Mrs. Walker leaning on the arm of her daughter, and he said, " She goeth unto the grave to weep there ;" and he was about to withdraw in silence, when Mrs. Walker looked up and perceived him ; and with

that unutterable distress which levels all distinction, she offered him her hand; he bowed his head, and withdrew.

Time soothed the sorrow for one of whom it might justly be written, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours." We might long dwell among scenes where faith and hope point to the land of blessedness; we might long continue to mark the silent progress of humble piety, and the influence of holy lives on those among whom they were passed. But we must leave these friends, we must return to our own village, and endeavour to practise there what we have witnessed in other scenes. We must watch with Mrs. Walker over the rising young ones around, we must visit the abodes of sorrow and sickness, and in our own family circle so endeavour to set an example of Christian meekness and forbearance as may best adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. If we have commended the abiding truths of Christianity; if we have exposed the fallacy of worldly dependance on happiness here; if we have shown that no cup is presented to mortal taste but hath some mixture of bitterness, we have assuredly drawn a faithful picture of our state here. Should one heart be led

to contemplate its state by nature, one resolution be strengthened by what is here presented to the reader, the hope of the writer is gratified, and the desire accomplished.

THE END.

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